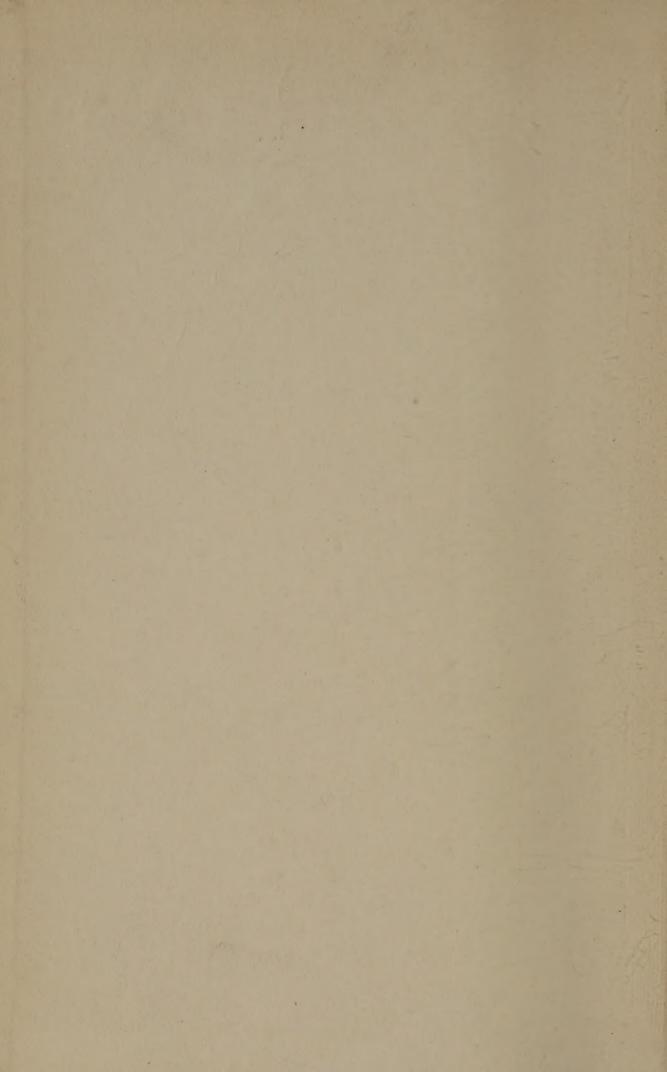
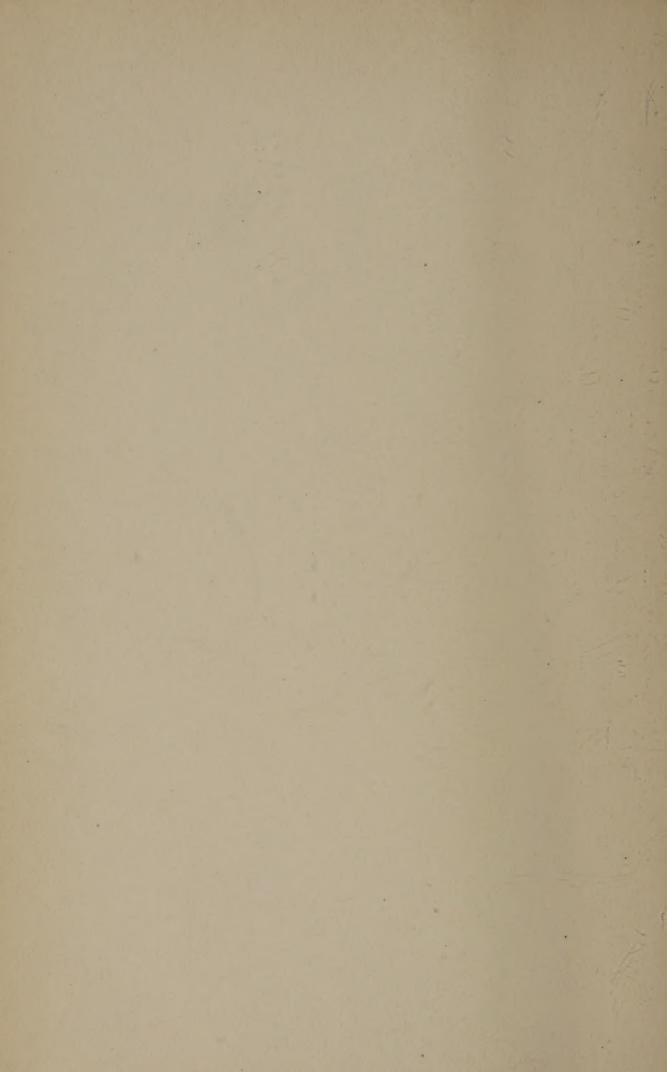


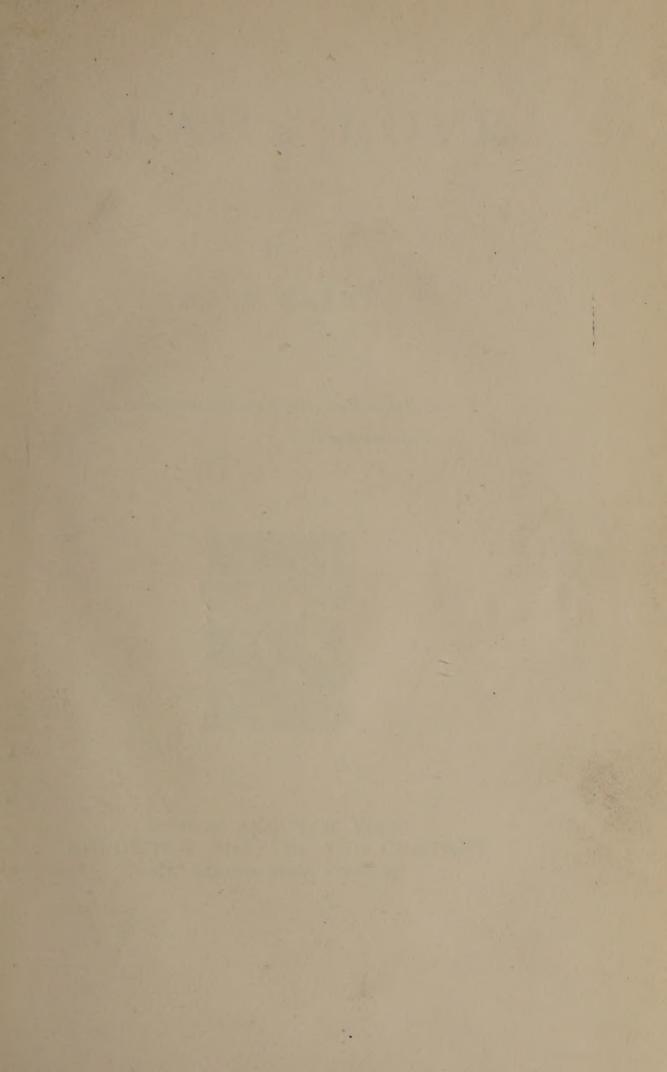
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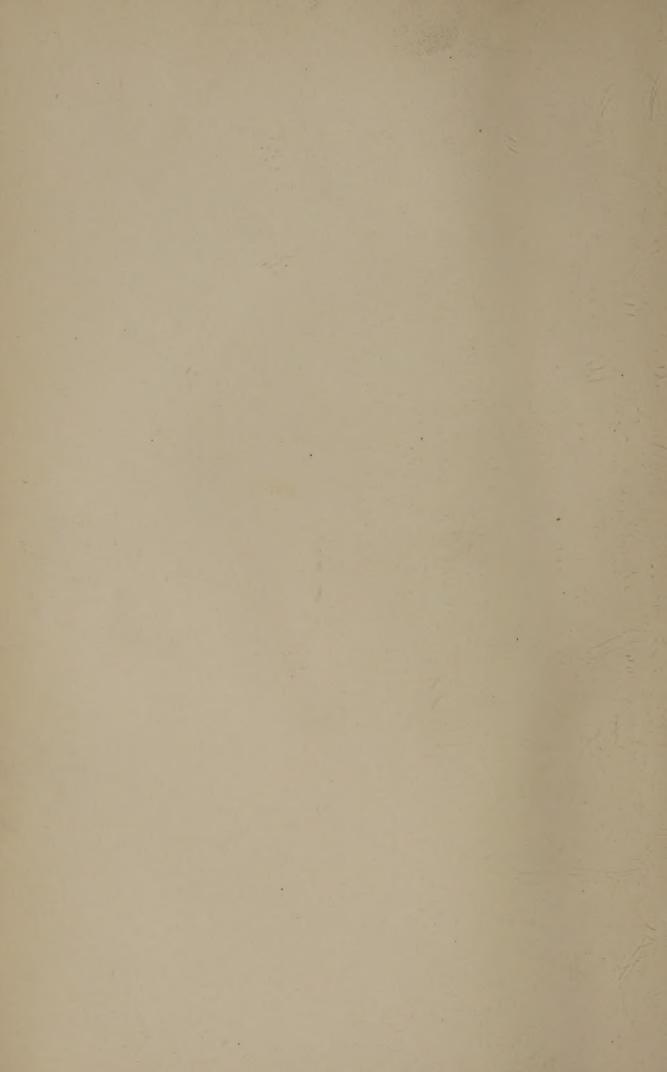


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# A LAD'S LOVE

BY

#### ARLO BATES

The flaring twinkle of a rush-light; the delusive fervor of a lad's love.

Youth and Age, iv. 3.



BOSTON AND NEW YORK HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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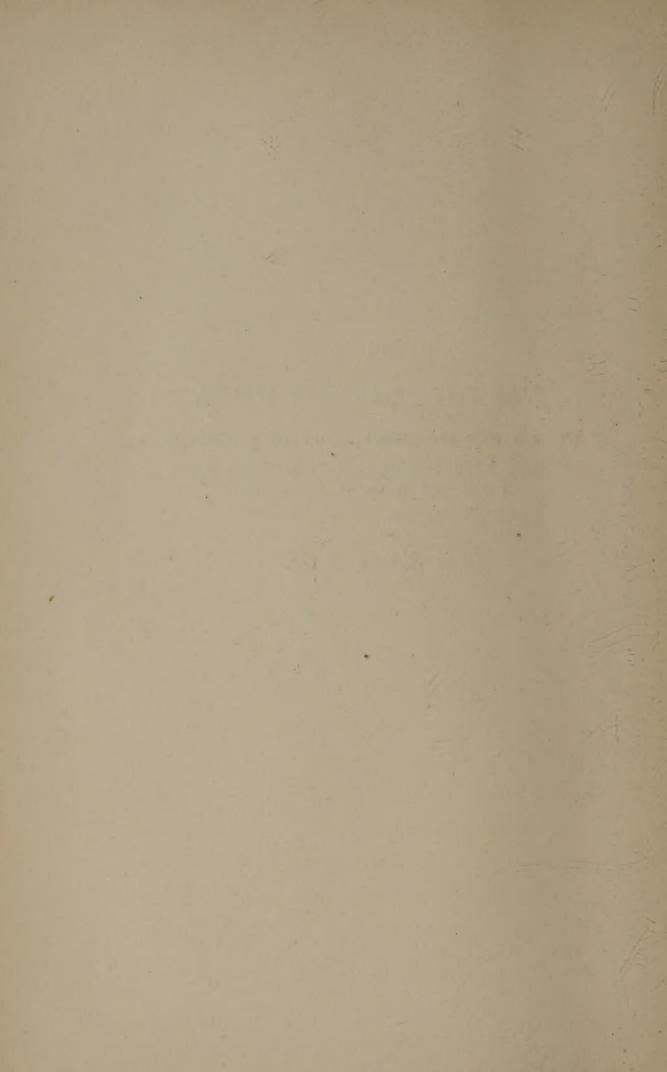
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FIFTH IMPRESSION

### MRS. KATE GANNETT WELLS,

TO WHOM I OWE MY INTRODUCTION TO CAMPOBELLO, AS
WELL AS VALUABLE AID IN PAST LITERARY WORK,
I VENTURE, WITHOUT PERMISSION,
TO OFFER

A Lad's Lobe.



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### A LAD'S LOVE.

I.

HERE BEGIN WE, FORSOOTH.

Youth and Age, iii. 1.

"OF course good masters make good servants," Mrs. Bodewin Ranger observed, with that air of easy and good-natured condescension which cannot be acquired in less than three or four generations; "but it is necessary to have decent material to work on."

There was a murmur of approval and assent from the group of ladies seated on the broad piazza of the Tyn-y-coed, the sentiment commending itself thoroughly to feminine souls often tried sorely in fruitless struggles to make domestic silk purses from the most hopelessly swinish ears. There followed the inevitable bringing forward of the opinion of somebody's husband as confirming Mrs. Ranger's remark, and then that subject was tacitly regarded as disposed of for the time being.

"Where did Mrs. Van Orden go this after-

noon?" inquired somebody, after a pause of a moment,—a pause filled with the soft sound of the summer wind, the sense of the nearness of the sea, and the fulness of restful quiet which pervades the island of Campobello on an August afternoon.

"Mrs. Van? She's gone over to Schooner Cove with Mr. Hampton," Mrs. Bodewin Ranger answered, toying with the ivory paper-knife she held, and with which she had not cut a leaf of the volume on her lap for the entire afternoon. "Miss Mayho and Miss Hatherway are with them, and two or three of the young men, — Mr. Manton and Mr. West, I believe. I saw them start off."

It was one of Mrs. Ranger's peculiarities that she always spoke with the air of settling everything, so that one in talking to her had constantly a sense of effort in seeking for points which her statements had not fully covered. It was not an assumption of complete knowledge so much as an air of finality, as if whatever she said was the close of a conversation. It was half a moment now before anybody succeeded in seizing a question by means of which the subject of the excursion to Schooner Cove might be continued. Then it occurred to one lady to inquire,—

"Did they go on horseback?"

The reply was out of key with the placid mood in which the conversation had hitherto been conducted.

"You may be sure," said Mrs. Kellogg, a faded woman with a suggestion of acidity in her manner and a curious habit of feeling of her nose as if to assure herself that she had not dropped or mislaid it, "that Mrs. Van Orden did not neglect an opportunity of showing herself in the saddle,"

"She is very fond of riding," put in Mrs. Crawford, a kindly soul from Philadelphia, who generally took it upon herself to correct, so far as lay in her power, any unpleasant impression which might be produced by the ill-natured remarks of Mrs. Kellogg. "I'm sure I don't blame her. If I looked as well on horseback as she does, I dare say I should want to ride all the time myself."

"But it is so ridiculous," persisted Mrs. Kellogg, "for a woman of her age. She must be pretty well on toward forty."

"Thirty-five," placidly corrected Mrs. Wilson, a serene old lady who occupied her abundant leisure in the knitting of innumerable zephyr shawls, which she gave away as fast as she finished them.

"Well, thirty-five, then. She has a grown-up daughter, at any rate; and it seems to me it is

in remarkably poor taste for her to go about with the young people all the time, as if she were a girl in her teens."

Mrs. Wilson looked up from her knitting with reproof in her glance, but she did not speak.

"But the girls want her," Mrs. Crawford said.
"They are never willing to go without her."

Mrs. Kellogg angrily assured herself that her nose was still in its place.

"Oh, I dare say not," she returned with increasing acerbity. "Still, I suppose that nobody will deny that the way she flirts with Mr. Hampton is ridiculous. She is old enough to be his mother."

There was an instant of silence after this remark. It might have been difficult to explain just why it had been tacitly agreed at the Tyn-y-coed that the relations between Mrs. Van Orden and Gilbert Hampton should not be discussed, but of the fact there was no doubt in the minds of any of the circle. She was a pretty widow from New York, and he a young fellow from a Massachusetts town, just at the end of his course at Harvard. All summer the intimacy between the pair, so ill-assorted in age, if one looked upon their friendship from a matrimonial point of view, had been increasing, — becoming in the end so marked that it was plain to whoever chose to observe that there was danger of its

getting to be a serious matter. It was perhaps partly because there was an instinctive feeling that there lay in the growing attachment of the young man for the widow a certain desperate sincerity which must ultimately cause him to suffer. Brought into direct, personal contact with the frank, earnest lad, the ladies at the house could hardly gossip heartlessly concerning him; and to be really enjoyable, gossip must be free from any genuine sympathy. some cause, at least, the matter of Hampton's fondness for Mrs. Van Orden had never been so openly spoken of as to-day; and there was a general feeling that Mrs. Kellogg, in bringing into the conversation a question which had by general even if unspoken consent been allowed to rest in silence, had violated the unwritten code of the circle. Even Mrs. Crawford, who usually followed her friend like a sort of corrective echo, had nothing to say now; and Mrs. Kellogg was too thoroughly in sympathy with the circle around her not to understand the reproof which the silence implied. She flushed slightly upon her sallow cheeks, and there was a faint tinge of bravado in the manner in which she seemed to lift her head by her nose as by a handle while she went on with her strictures.

"Of course, if she wanted to adopt him it would be very well; but I do dislike to see a

woman so deliberately turn a boy's head just from sheer vanity."

There was a well-marked expression of disapproval upon almost every face. Mrs. Bodewin Ranger lifted her fine head with its coronet of snowy curls, and regarded the offending speaker keenly with her sparkling dark eyes.

"Where," she asked, slowly and distinctly, yet with a softness which made the thrust she gave the more effective, "is your daughter this afternoon, Mrs. Kellogg? Did she go to Schooner Cove?"

The red blood sprang to the other's face. She comprehended fully that every woman present knew that she would have been glad to substitute her daughter for the widow in young Hampton's affection. The talk of women often seems to lack point from its very subtilty. The sex is so quick to understand emotions that the word need only to suggest rather than to express them; sentences which, taken literally, are the least expressive are frequently the most full of meaning. Mrs. Ranger's question admitted of no open retort, and in sound was simple and harmless enough; yet every hearer understood that it accused Mrs. Kellogg of being instigated by pique and jealousy to her attack upon Mrs. Van Orden.

"Clare is sketching the Friar," Mrs. Kellogg

said stiffly; and one of those uncomfortable pauses which are apt to emphasize a disagreeable situation followed her reply.

It was broken by Mrs. Wilson, who laughed softly to herself over her knitting, with a note especially pleasant under the circumstances.

"Do you know what Mr. West said this morning?" she remarked. "I asked him if he slept well after the rarebit party Mr. Manton gave last night, and he said: 'Oh, I slept very well, thank you, but the rabbit was awake all night.' He's the funniest boy I ever saw in my life."

"He told Mr. Crawford the other day," spoke Mrs. Crawford, glad to assist in covering the unpleasant rebuff administered to Mrs. Kellogg, "that at the hotel at Mount Desert where he stayed, the towels were so short they had only one end."

The sayings of Burton West, a Harvard student, lingering in conditioned uncertainty between his Sophomore and Junior years, never failed to meet with interest and approval in any company of the Tyn-y-coed people. He was summering at Campobello while his family were travelling in Europe, — the theory being that if left on this side of the Atlantic he might devote some leisure to the making up of the conditions laid upon him by an unfeeling Faculty, evidently determined not to admit him to the

Junior class if it were possible to avoid it. Thus far in the season there had been no evidence that the confidence of West's family that he would devote the summer to study was likely to be justified; but the question whether the young man did or did not get his Junior ticket was, after all, a matter of very little importance to his fellow-boarders. They suffered themselves to be amused by him, and they felt a certain sense of proprietorship in him, as if he were an unusually successful jester maintained by their approval, and with every clever saying reflecting credit upon their discernment.

"Mr. West said last night," joined in Mrs. Kellogg, rallying gallantly and determined to show that she had not been crushed, "that the boy in the bowling-alley was so lazy that if he were an angel he would n't have energy enough to keep the dust off his wings."

But Mrs. Bodewin Ranger seldom abandoned unfinished a contest she had once undertaken, and she had no idea of allowing her opponent so lightly to ignore the fact of Mrs. Ranger's disapproval. How far these little feminine self-assertions are conscious, and how far instinctive, is known only to the powers above; but they at least are one of the inevitable conditions of social supremacy.

"Mr. West is often very funny," she observed

with cold disapproval; "but his jokes are not always in the best of taste."

It was at once recognized that Mrs. Bodewin Ranger declined to be placated, and there was a general sentiment of disapprobation against Mrs. Kellogg. The latter lady tweaked her nose in nervous exasperation, but made no further remark. She felt herself worsted in the encounter, and with that feminine sense of justice which is not wholly without some semblance of being illogical, it was the absent Mrs. Van Orden she blamed for this discomfiture.

#### II.

A BABBLE OF SUMMER TALK.

Youth and Age, ii. 2.

THE road by which one reaches Schooner Cove is a pretty woodland way, rough here and there, and now and again passing over rustic bridges far better in intention than in appearance or for usefulness. It is bordered by pastures which, in these sunny August days, were turning rather brown; by groves of spruce and fir or even of fine beech-trees, of which sometimes the boughs meet overhead; and it leads on until at length appears a delicious view of the sea, set amid green branches like a sapphire rimmed with emeralds. As one presses forward, led on by this enchanting glimpse, the blue widens until a sparkling sheet of azure seawater spreads before him at the foot of the terrace-like bank which borders the Cove.

"For my part," Hitty Mayho declared, as the party of four in which she was riding drew rein and looked out over the gleaming bay, "I think Schooner Cove is as pretty as any of them."

"Oh, come now," retorted Burton West, who

rode at her bridle-rein, "you've said that of every place we've been to this whole blessed summer."

"I have n't either!" Hitty replied, turning from the view to face him, and taking up the dispute with girlish seriousness. "But the coves are so lovely down here."

"Oh, of course; only you need n't always say the same thing. The conversation at every picnic and every ride is always opened by a remark from Miss Mayho to the effect that, for her part, she thinks this place as pretty as any of them."

"That's so, Hitty," put in Kate Hatherway; "you really do say just that thing of every single place."

"Well, I don't care," Hitty protested, with feminine agility in changing her ground; "they are."

"Of course they are," observed the fourth member of the party in that slightly languid manner which, with his fastidious attire, had won for him the title of "the elegant Mr. Manton," by which the girls designated him among themselves. "You are right, Miss Mayho. They are all perfect, so of course each is as good as any of them."

"Oh, come now, Andy," demanded West. "What are you giving us? Are you making fun of this crowd, or of Campobello? We are

bound to be down on you whichever it is, so you'd better go slow."

Miss Hatherway put up her hands to adjust her hair, whose crisp wilfulness was apt to overcome the conventional restraints imposed upon it; and the laugh of mild scorn by which Mr. Manton might be understood to decline to take the trouble to exonerate himself was mingled with the faint sound of hoof-beats on the road by which the party had come.

"Here they are at last," Miss Mayho said, starting up her horse. "For mercy's sake let's not stay here to be in the way."

"But Mrs. Van Orden is chaperoning us," Kate suggested, laughing. "Perhaps we ought to wait for her."

"Who is chaperoning her?" inquired Manton, who had left his saddle, and come forward to assist her in dismounting.

"Oh, nobody," she replied, springing, with his aid, lightly to the ground. "That is the advantage of being a widow."

"How jolly it would be to be born a widow," observed Hitty. "Then one could go about alone before they got so old there was no more fun in it."

"Mrs. Van Orden gets fun out of it," West observed. "Come; are n't you thinking of getting off that horse?"

Hitty looked down into his boyish face with a roguish twinkle in her eye. Her air was full of mischief, and it showed no more coquetry than might have been found in the bearing of a school-girl.

"No," she returned; "I'm going to ride over to the Cliffs."

"Much you are!"

"I am, really. What do I want to travel all the way on foot for, with this horse hired by the hour?"

"Well," West commented, with much frankness, "I really believe you're foolish enough to be in earnest."

Hearing the discussion, Manton and Miss Hatherway, who had started along the beach in the direction of the wood-path leading to Castle Cliffs, turned back to remonstrate. Once her whimsical notion was combated, however, Mistress Hitty, who really had intended no such thing, set her wilful little heart upon going to the Cliffs in the saddle. All representations of the steepness, the roughness, the bogginess, and the crookedness of the way, merely strengthened her determination.

"If it is half as bad as you say," she answered their arguments, her eyes dancing with fun, "I could n't think of walking; and I must see Castle Cliffs." "Well," West said at last, unfastening his horse and remounting, "if you are bound to destroy yourself, I suppose I must commit suicide along with you. Send word to my governor, Andy, that I perished in the path of duty, and that I leave him my allowance, my debts, and my Junior conditions to console him."

"If the path of duty is as hard as the way to the Cliffs," Kate Hatherway rejoined as the party moved on, "I want none of it."

"If it were the path of duty," commented Manton, "it's rather doubtful if Miss Mayho would be so determined on taking it."

"Don't be abusive, or I'll ride over you," retorted Hitty.

And the four, having climbed the slope, disappeared into the woods, as the actors in a scene make an exit into the wings.

They were hardly out of sight when their places were taken by the missing chaperone and her escort, who rode at a leisurely pace down the stage to where the pebbly beach took the place of footlights in front of this summer comedy. They had that pleasantly confidential manner which intimates that their conversation, even if it has chanced to be upon the most indifferent topics, has been carried on in a most friendly and intimate tone. In reality they had been discussing nothing more intimate or senti-

mental than Hampton's dogs, of which he was extremely fond and proud, and which he hoped some day to have the pleasure of showing to his companion; but an observer, had one been present, might have supposed from their faces and engrossed air that their talk had been on far more tender topics.

They did not linger at the Cove, although the sweeping glance which the widow gave over the view, and the look of pleasure which came into her eyes showed that she knew the place and loved it. Dismounting, they took their way at once along the path leading to the Cliffs.

"But where are the other horses?" Mrs. Van Orden asked suddenly, turning on the slope before the path enters the wood and looking back. "That is Mr. Manton's horse. Mr. West and one of the girls must have gone along the shore to Herring Cove."

"Gone along the shore!" exclaimed Gilbert, pointing to the hoof-tracks on the ground before them; "that crazy Burt West has ridden in here, and Miss Mayho is with him. If they don't break the horses' legs and their own necks it will be a miracle."

"You put the horses' legs first, I see," his companion returned; "but you need n't be troubled. There's a divinity which watches over Burt West,—and over Miss Mayho, too,

for that matter. They are a pair of irresponsible children, and Providence takes care of them."

"I hope Providence will have an eye to the beasts too in this case," rejoined he, "or it will go hard with them. Heavens, what a place to take a horse into!"

Olive Van Orden threw him a laughing glance backward over her shoulder as she walked before him in the narrow track.

"I wonder," she said, "if any woman will ever appear of half the consequence in your eyes that dogs and horses are. I am afraid," she continued, as he attempted to speak, "that even if you ever marry, your wife will at best be like that unfortunate Cousin Amy in Locksley Hall, and run a desperate chance of coming in second to your dog and horse in your affections."

"The woman I marry—" he began, but she either did not hear or did not choose to heed.

"I suppose," she went on, "that it is because you have associated with animals so much more than with people that you seem so young. I do not believe you are really more than seventeen."

"But I am," Hampton replied with rather more emphasis than seemed necessary; "I am

twenty, as you know, — and indeed I am nearer twenty-one than twenty."

The other broke into a burst of gleeful amusement.

"How boyish that is!" she said. "'I'm free-five, mamma,' is the way my Phœbe used to put it when she was barely three. Dear me! how hard this walking is with the skirt of my habit to carry. If one knew what any path was like in this world I suppose he would n't take it. Bah! what a silly piece of pessimism!"

She shook her head over her platitude, and they walked on in silence a moment.

"Just see how the horses floundered along here," Gilbert commented. "It was outrageous to bring them in."

The pair were now following a tortuous path through a forest strange and uncanny in appearance. Overhead the foliage formed a thick canopy through which filtered a spectral light, green and mysterious; while all the tree-trunks, gray and leafless below, rose tall and slender to support the roof of boughs which shut off the sun's rays completely. There is something most eldritch and ghostly about this wood; and in walking through it a person with sensitive fancy might almost seem to himself to have strayed into some glade of mediæval romance, where enchantment has power, where one might

expect to encounter grisly phantoms, and see shapes uncouth and unearthly appear and disappear amid the hoary tree-trunks, — where even the sight of Atlas on his hippogriff or of a procession of the Harpies who invited themselves to dine with Prester John would seem too much in keeping with the scene to be wholly surprising. Here and there immense gnarled trunks lean over in fantastic attitudes, draped with sombre mosses, and suggesting to the imagination rather that they are the product of unholy spells than of natural growth.

Any attempt to describe this forest, which might have been made by some cunning necromancer from the mists and salty exhalations of the Atlantic, which forever thunders at the foot of the cliffs upon which its weird trees cluster, must seem whimsically overstrained and untrue to those who have not seen the wood; while equally those who have traversed its involved footpaths will know only too well how inadequate are words to reproduce its strangeness and its singular charm.

The path winds and twists, rising continually, although with motion as undulating as that of a snake. It bends from side to side, as uncouth tree-trunks and moss-covered rocks of fantastic shape stand directly in its way; it plunges into innumerable hollows, and then again makes

sudden, sharp ascents. Here and there the foot slips in soft moss, and in the hollows the damp soil is sodden and wet. Gilbert's frequent remarks upon the difficulty the horses must have encountered were sufficiently borne out by the many traces left in the broken ground of the floundering and struggles of the unlucky beasts.

"There!" Olive said, as they came to a turn in the path, where a big birch-tree stood in singular fashion upon a pile of rocks; "I am going to sit down and rest."

A couple of birches, on which the curling bark hung unstripped by Indians, contributed their effect to add to the picturesqueness of the obstacle which forced the path to turn aside; and nature had fashioned the rocks into a seat which Olive found very comfortable. She looked through the distorted wood-spaces into dim recesses which possess the peculiarity of making one expect that from them may at any moment issue living figures. She sighed softly, from mere delight in the strange beauty of the place, -- the softened light, the sound of the low, lisping rustle which pervaded like a mysterious whisper the tree-tops overhead, the faint odors of growing plants, and the fresh smell of damp earth. She was keenly alive to the charm of all these things, and her smile as she

threw down her riding-whip was like a greeting to the wood and whatever denizens might there inhabit.

Hampton flung himself upon the moss at his companion's feet, pushed his cap off from the back of his head, and pulled off his riding-gloves.

"You seem to be preparing to stay some time," she said, smiling down upon him.

"I am merely making myself comfortable," he answered. "I wish I had a cigarette."

"I am glad you have n't. It is barbarous to spoil every bit of fresh air we get with your endless cigarette-smoke."

He laughed, stretching himself backward to lean against a tree-trunk, with his hands clasped behind his head. He was perfectly contented and blissful simply to be near her and to enjoy the nameless delight of her presence untroubled by others. He looked up into the roof of leaves overhead, so thick that no glimpse of sky could be seen, and lost himself in revery, too happy to speak. He had in his mind a half-conscious resolve that to-day he would tell Olive that he loved her; but at this moment he was satisfied to be quiet and gaze at her. Olive looked down at him, and their eyes met. She moved uneasily.

"How delicious it is!" she said. "We must

make up a picnic-party to come to the Cliffs after Phœbe gets here."

"When is she coming, — day after to-morrow?"

"Yes. She waited for Dr. Westacott, or she would have been here to-day."

Gilbert sat up and cast his eyes frowningly upon the ground.

"Day after to-morrow is so soon," he said.

He took up his riding-crop and began to chew its ivory with an air of dissatisfaction, while his companion braided together the long gray fibres of moss which floated in tufted fringes from a twig beside her shoulder.

"I wish," Hampton said, after a moment's silence, "that she were not coming. Could n't you write her to go somewhere else?"

"Go somewhere else!" echoed Olive. "Tell Phœbe not to come? How absurd!"

The preposterousness of the proposition seemed to strike her more forcibly as she thought it over. She leaned her head against the tree-trunk behind her and broke into a laugh as silvery as a girl's.

"Oh, but you are simply delicious!" she cried, clasping her hands and laughing more than ever. "Why, you silly boy, I especially sent for her, when she did n't want to leave Mt. Desert!"

Mrs. Van Orden was too thoroughly a woman

of the world not to know how well she looked as she sat there, the color of her splendid red hair at once brought out by the dull green and smoke-tints of the tree-trunks and softened by the veiled light filtered through the leafy roof above; her beautiful throat displayed in all its whiteness by the poise of her head; her eyes shining with laughter, and her parted lips allowing a glimpse of perfect teeth. Had she been ignorant, moreover, of the effectiveness of her attitude, she might have learned it from the admiring, adoring looks of the boy at her feet. He lifted his gaze with an expression so ardent, albeit wistful, that the widow, who had already to-day found him inclined to love-making, felt it wise to speak again, without waiting to see of what indiscretion he might be guilty.

"Don't you know," she went on, "that I've sent for Phœbe on purpose for you to fall in love with her?"

"Thank you; but I'd rather—"

"It is no matter what you'd rather," she interrupted prudently. "I have n't consulted your inclination in the matter at all."

"You seldom do," he retorted, although without any sign of bitterness.

He was too completely, however foolishly, happy to be capable of even pretending to be offended. He was in that fools' paradise into

which a youth can stray but once, and from which the expulsion is apt to be bitter indeed. Most men can look back to a time when this phantasm of love, this illusion of passion, filled their whole being with a joy unspeakable; and so untroubled is this delight by doubts or by the wisdom which experience brings that it is almost more complete, although it be also more fleeting and far less deep, than a man's real passion.

Gilbert moved imperceptibly nearer to the feet of his companion, throwing down his crop and picking up instead her whip from the ground. It was inexpressibly delightful to him to hold and to fondle the silver handle which she had clasped.

The motion with which he took the whip up did not escape Olive's keen observation. She looked down upon him smiling still, yet with a wistful tenderness in her heart of which he could have no comprehension. She wondered how far she had done wrong in letting the passion of this frank, pure-hearted boy grow up as it had grown. At first she had not dreamed it possible that Gilbert should seriously love one so much his senior, and when the truth began to force itself upon her she had assured herself that so anomalous a situation must inevitably correct itself. To-day Hampton's words and manner

had been such that it had become folly to attempt to ignore the fact that he was ready to declare his passion. As he lay at her feet here in the wood, his penetrating glance, half-sad, half-burning, forced her to acknowledge that the regard with which she had to reckon was by no means mere friendliness and comradeship. A wave of mingled fear and remorse swept over her. She started to her feet suddenly.

"Come," she said, gathering up the skirt of her habit; "we must go on."

"Wait," he responded, springing up and laying his hand on hers. "I want to tell you something."

"Not now," she returned hastily, as she hurried along the path. "Just think how far behind we are. Hark!"

A girl's scream came pealing through the wood.

"There's something the matter," Olive exclaimed. "Run, Gilbert, and see what it is."

"It's the horses, of course," he called back over his shoulder as he darted past her, and hurried forward at as swift a pace as the broken ground permitted.

## III.

CAUGHT IN THE WEFT OF WOOD MAGIC.

Youth and Age, ii. 2.

A S Gilbert ran lightly along the path he heard before him a mingled sound of feminine shrieks, masculine expostulation, and as he came nearer to the source of the noise, the struggling of horses. A turn in the way brought him in sight of the rest of the party. It was evident at a glance that an accident had occurred, although the fact that Manton was reclining luxuriously at the foot of a big tree fanning himself with a brake seemed to indicate that nothing very serious had befallen any of the party.

Miss Mayho's horse was in an awkward position between sitting and lying down, and was struggling violently to find firm footing in a sort of dry bog of dead moss and rotten wood in which he had fallen; while his rider stood with Kate Hatherway rather nearer to the plunging beast than was at all safe.

"For my part," Manton observed, just as Hampton came up, "I think a derrick is what you need."

"A derrick!" ejaculated West, tugging at the bridle. "Why don't you help me get this horse up, instead of lying there and talking nonsense?"

"My dear fellow," returned Manton, with the drawl he put on when he especially desired to exasperate his chum, "I nobly rescued Miss Mayho from instant destruction, and I supposed that was about my share."

"You nearly pulled me in two," Hitty put in ungratefully. "I wonder that half of me was n't left in the saddle. That poor horse!"

The exclamation was called forth by a plunge of more violence than ever, by virtue of which the struggling animal managed to land himself on a substantial foothold, where he stood trembling and panting, with an expression of mingled bewilderment and indignation.

"It seems to me, West," Hampton said, going to the horse's head and soothing the beast, "that you ought to know better than to take the horses into this beastly hole. It's a wonder you did n't break his legs."

West turned toward him with a droll grimace.

"I've always noticed," he returned, "that blame in this world is in exact proportion to innocence, and I prefer to be guilty, myself; you stand a better chance."

"It was my fault," Miss Mayho began; when

the arrival of Mrs. Van Orden interrupted her and gave a new turn to the conversation.

"Well," the widow said, looking about her with an air which, despite its assumption of jest, was not wholly free from genuine reproach, "if I had known what advantage was to be taken of my letting you out of my sight, I should have kept up with you. Whose neck is broken? Mr. Manton, you look so very much pleased with yourself that I suppose you are at the bottom of this folly."

"Yes," he answered, settling himself into the moss more comfortably than ever. "Or rather, I came very near being. The horse was just in front of me when he went down, and nothing but my unparalleled dexterity and swiftness saved me from coming down underneath him."

"Nonsense," put in West. "You were too lazy to get out of the path, and Miss Mayho had to ride round you. That is how the horse lost his footing."

Manton turned himself over upon his back and looked up into the trees.

"Any man who can speak of my being lazy," he declared, as if appealing to the skies for justice, "when I have just displayed so much energy in rescuing Miss Mayho, would be capable of anything. You at least ought to be grateful, Miss Hitty."

"You tore my habit," she answered; "I can't be very grateful for the salvation of my neck at such a cost."

Kate Hatherway leaned against a crooked treetrunk, twisting her whip in her hands and laughing.

"I never saw Mr. Manton exert himself before," she said. "He set his teeth with an expression of such fierce determination that I—"

"Shrieked," interrupted Manton.

"Of course I shrieked. I thought it was the very least I could do to assist. You would n't have had me coldly indifferent, would you?"

"We shall probably have to make a litter and carry Andy home," Burt declared. "After such a strain as that he 'll be incapable of walking."

"He may have my horse back to the Cove," Hitty put in. "I certainly shall not trust myself in the saddle again in this path."

"I should n't think you would dare tempt Providence with such base ingratitude on your soul," Manton retorted.

They were like so many children jesting and disputing, only that children might perhaps have been less good-natured; but as it had more than once come to Olive Van Orden this summer, there stole over her a sense of remoteness,—a consciousness of having outgrown all this trifling, of being beyond the age that finds pleasure in

the mere clash of merry words signifying little or nothing. She sat down upon a convenient root, which, after the abnormal fashion of the wood, chose to live above ground instead of beneath it, while her companions talked all at once, teasing each other and soothing the horses. Her smile was undimmed, but the conversation she had broken off with Gilbert was still in her mind, and she felt herself out of place among these young people, who were as thoughtless and gleeful in this weird wood as children. She had a painful feeling of being an interloper, and of its somehow not being quite honorable to be here. With a little shiver she started up quickly.

"Come," she said; "you have quarrelled quite long enough. If we are going to the Cliffs we must get on. The horses are well enough here. I always feel," she continued, as she walked along the path, having intentionally taken her place next to Manton, "as if I were caught by a spell here and should never be able to get out. It is the most uncanny place I ever saw."

"Is n't it?" Andrew returned. "I've been here a dozen times, and it impresses me more every time. They say everything in America looks new, but this wood must be as old as time."

"Oh, come now," called the voice of West from behind; "I know a turnip from a hand-spike when I see one. I tell you, she is the prettiest girl at Mt. Desert this year."

"Do you hear that, Mrs. Van Orden?" Kate asked. "You've got to keep close watch of Mr. West. He's been to Bar Harbor and fallen in love with your daughter already."

Olive turned quickly.

"Did you see Phœbe at Bar Harbor?" she inquired eagerly. "Did you meet her?"

"Why, yes," Burt replied, with what Manton called his "unabashable grin." "The truth is, I spoke to her by a mistake, and she looked so much like her mother that she knew me directly."

"That's well done, Burt," observed Manton.
"To start out so far back with saying that Miss Van Orden is the prettiest girl at Bar Harbor and bring the conversation round to this, shows a long head."

"Oh, that is not a circumstance to what I can do. I am not suffering a curriculum at Harvard for nothing. But then, the girls at Bar Harbor are never so pretty as they are at Campobello."

"Be careful," Manton rejoined; "you are getting into deep water when you try comparisons."

Gilbert walked on behind Miss Mayho, since

the winding, narrow path forced them to go singly. He was silent and absent. He had not perceived that Mrs. Van Orden had purposely cut short their conversation, and he was not at all cast down; but his heart was full to overflowing with the seriousness of his first passion. He walked in a dream, and the light talk about him only penetrated into his mind deeply enough to make him smile now and then at some of West's absurdities. He was too thoroughly happy even to be offended, as in some moods he might have been, at West's open compliment. The completeness of his love gave him a sense of security. He had had no experience of life which should make him doubtful of the issue of his suit, and he felt the most full delight of ownership as he walked along the rustic track and listened to the voice of the woman he loved sounding clear and bell-like before him. He was still so young that it had never occurred to him to doubt that love such as his must be successful. He did not dread the issue, because it had never entered his thought that an untoward end were possible.

He was dimly conscious, in a sweetly pleasant abstraction, of the beauty and strangeness of the forest; the softness of the shifting lights and woodland glooms; but his whole attention was none the less fixed upon Olive. He saw her figure between the tree-trunks, glancing on before him as the sinuous track wound along; he heard her laughter and clear speech; and now and then she turned her face so that he caught a fleeting glimpse of it. He was so completely full of her image and her presence, to his boyish imagination she so completely and absolutely belonged to him, that he did not even think to regret that he was not still walking with her. A distance world-wide would in his present mood hardly have seemed a separation; much less was he troubled by the few paces and the two or three faces between them.

The path took its capricious way onward, becoming more and more wild and strange, until, just as it seemed as if nothing short of the enchantments of some sorcerer mighty as Merlin could set the travellers free, it came out abruptly upon a little open space thickly set with tall rush-like grass. Before them stretched a glorious sweep of sea and sky; from below the surf sounded hoarsely as it beat on the rocks, inflexible and black; the gulls wheeled flashing in snowy flocks over the ledges off shore; while in the southeast the purple line of Grand Menan loomed like a Fata Morgana.

"We are not there yet," West answered the cries of delight of Miss Mayho, to whom the

spot was new. "This is a preparatory glimpse to whet the appetite."

They plunged into the woods again, but soon once more they came into the open, and found themselves at the top of Castle Cliffs.

The cliffs have need to be impressive to form a fitting climax for the way which leads to them. The visitor stands as if lifted into the air above a chaos of jagged rock, amid which the sea surges and boils, heaping glittering, gem-like drops upon black ledges; crusting ragged bowlders with evanescent frost-work of foam; drawing back as a tiger crouches his head down upon his paws, and then springing upon some impassive spur with a cat-like hiss. Before is the splendid reach of sea water, the islands dark and shadowy; and near at hand the bold and noble line of the shore stretching away toward Schooner Cove. On the left one looks far down into a sharp and sudden bay, where the shadows make the green water transparent and seamed with cloudy bars slanting downward toward the pebbly bottom. The walls of rock rise sheer and precipitous, like the rust-stained walls of a sea fortress; and from their tops the moss-bearded trees standing sentinel peer shiveringly down at their tremulous reflection far below.

Forever over all is that sense of silence which seems to underlie the incessant sounding of the

waves and the sighing of the wind in forest branches; and the place is ruled by that spell of the sea so powerful that it hushed even this gay and trifling company into silence and pleasant sadness. They sat around, talking quietly of the view,—even Burt West subdued into quiet for the time being.

Gilbert threw himself at full length upon the short, dry grass, and looked out over the bay, at the pearly gulls, at the amethystine wall of Grand Menan, at the sky, soft and pale beside the sapphire of the sea. He made no attempt to place himself near Mrs. Van Orden. The approach he had made to a declaration had upon him for the moment all the effect of success, and had he been a formally accepted lover, he could hardly have felt a warmer glow of happiness in his bosom. He was so deeply moved that his bliss almost brought a sob to his throat, as he lay there idly and unconsciously knitting his fingers into the dry grass, warm and slippery, and feeling the presence of the woman he adored with all the passion of his fervid young heart enclose him like a blessed atmosphere.

## IV.

THEN NEEDS MUST LOVE BE SCOURGED.

Youth and Age, iv. 3.

THE boy who grows up without the influence of a mother is almost surely either hard or morbid. He is either stunted in the development of the finer and softer side of his nature, or he has, from lack of proper sympathy,—that sympathy which can be found only in mother love,—grown into a sentimentalism which has no true appreciation of the demands which may properly be made upon human affection. His hunger for love renders him unable fairly to distinguish the real worth of any friendship which is offered to him, and if he is of an ardent or an imaginative temperament, he is apt to run into extremes of violent attachment, which from the very nature of things must be brief.

Gilbert Hampton was too sensible to be sentimental, but the tenderness of his nature had been turned inward and kept from natural expression. It is not uncommon for any lad to lavish his first love upon a woman older than

himself, and in Gilbert's case there was, perhaps, mingled with the usual devotion of such an attachment, the outgoing of the affection which he would have given to his mother had she lived. Doubtless Olive, despite the fact that she often enough told him she held him as a son, would have been a little piqued had it been suggested to her that the lad offered her a devotion which was partly filial; and yet this was undoubtedly the true state of affairs, although neither was precisely aware of it.

He had known Mrs. Van Orden between two and three months, and it seemed to him as if into that time he had compressed the life of years. He had been her slave from the very first day of his arrival at Campobello, when Mrs. Wilson, who, as a friend and distant relative of Gilbert's mother, took it upon herself, as the girls said, to chaperone the lad, had presented him as "my great-nephew, - by brevet, you know." He had looked into Mrs. Van Orden's velvety brown eyes, and something within him had awakened. A new delight and wonder stirred in his heart, and suddenly life became possessed of a zest undreamed of before. A sweet, restless trouble quickened his heart-beats and made him a stranger to himself. He did not question his feelings or realize what had befallen him, but day after day he followed

Olive with a more and more perfect absorption. He walked with her, sailed with her, carried her traps when she went sketching, took her rowing by moonlight, rode with her, drove with her, for her sake forswore tennis, and was her inseparable companion, with an absolute indifference alike to the chaff of his mates, the sarcasms of Mrs. Kellogg, and the remonstrances of Mrs. Wilson, who, being secretly advised thereto by Mrs. Bodewin Ranger, had shaken her snowy head over him in kindly and ineffectual remonstrance. He was absorbed, bewitched, headstrong. He openly broke through Mrs. Kellogg's schemes to bring him and her daughter Clare together, with a frank and boyish disregard for conventionalities that amused the disinterested lookers-on greatly; and for which Mrs. Van Orden took it upon herself more than once to scold him very prettily. He was so obviously and undisguisedly indifferent to what any observer thought or said that he ended by disarming criticism; for there is after all no great satisfaction in attacking one too indifferent to defend himself; and since he was well-born, handsome, well-bred, and plentifully endowed with the goods of this world, he took his own way, as such favorites of fortune usually do take it.

Mrs. Van Orden did not escape so easily;

but it was one of the shining virtues of society at the Tyn-y-coed that gossip was seldom encouraged. There was perhaps a feeling that with so many people about who knew everybody it was scarcely safe to speak disparagingly of any person whatever; and there was also a sense of being so perilously near Boston that tittle-tattle was not only out of character but dangerous. More than all, however, was this absence of scandal-mongering due to the fact that a few high-bred dames like Mrs. Wilson and the grand Mrs. Bodewin Ranger gave tone to the society at the house, and they were too truly gentlewomen to endure objectionable gossip. Still there could not fail to be a general feeling that Mrs. Van Orden was acting in defiance to the unwritten code of society in absorbing the attention of a young man whom she naturally could never think of marrying, and whose time and company manifestly belonged to the younger people.

Life at a summer watering-place, however, is beautifully complex, and in no two resorts are the conditions precisely the same. Another peculiarity of Campobello society told in the widow's favor. Thus far in the history of its career as a watering-place the island has seen very little serious flirting. The relations of the young people have been singularly frank and comrade-

like. The early days of most sea-side resorts are marked by this social phase, which too soon vanishes. Doubtless in time Campobello will follow in the beaten track, and this frankness be lost here, as it has been at Mt. Desert; and one can only devoutly hope it may not be followed by an era of freedom degenerated into vulgarity. As yet, however, there has been none of that cap-setting which would have made all the girls regard the widow as an elderly piratical rover upon seas matrimonial, and treat her with defiance accordingly. They liked Mrs. Van Orden, and, too, they liked Hampton; if the two chose to pair off together the girls laughed, the boys joked a little, and there was pretty much an end to the matter.

Olive herself was not without compunctions now and then; but she always soothed her conscience by assuring herself that it was impossible for a mere boy like Gilbert to be seriously in love with her. She returned from the excursion to Schooner Cove really troubled in regard to the relations between herself and Hampton. She had no fear but that in the long run he would naturally outgrow an attachment so unsuitable; but, for the first time, she began to suspect that his feelings were so deep that he could not be awakened from his dream without real suffering. She was deeply fond of the lad. She liked his

frankness, his eager, enthusiastic way of looking at life, his straightforward manliness; and she was not exempt from a secret pleasure at his interest in her. To a woman past her first youth, there is a tacit compliment in every spontaneous attention from a young man. It is a delicate and unconscious method of assuring her that she is still young which is especially grateful to the feminine heart; and it was natural and human that Olive should be susceptible to the subtile pleasure of finding herself still able to attract and to hold a man young enough, as she frequently told Gilbert he was, to be her son.

As she brushed out the red masses of her hair that night, making her toilet for dinner, there was a troubled look in her eyes; and it was with a sigh that she began to twist the loose glittering coil, which Hitty Mayho declared always looked as if the loss of a single hairpin would bring it down, yet which kept its place through the roughest jaunts as if it were carved from amber.

"Well, it is too late to do anything now," was the thought with which she ended her debate with herself. "If any harm could be done it is done; and Phœbe and Rufus will be here Saturday. I must manage to keep him in order till Phœbe comes, and then—"

She did not finish the sentence even in her

thoughts, but turned from the mirror with another sigh, and went hastily on with her belated dressing.

Almost everybody had already gone in to dinner when Olive went downstairs; but Mr. and Mrs. Bodewin Ranger descended just before her, and they paused at the foot of the stairway, close by the dining-room door, for her to join them. Mrs. Ranger was always secretly fond of the widow, despite the fact that she could not wholly approve of Olive's gayety; and to-night she had not forgotten that in the brief passage-at-arms on the piazza she had taken sides against Mrs. Kellogg.

"Did you have a pleasant ride, Mrs. Van Orden?" she asked. "How pretty you look! You dress too well; you put the rest of us in the shade."

"Can a woman ever dress too well?" inquired Mr. Bodewin Ranger, in the courtly, formal fashion which was natural to him, and to which his high-bred, somewhat antique person was wonderfully well adapted.

Olive opened her big brown eyes and spread out her hands in a deprecatory gesture, glancing down at her gown with a pretty air of apologetic surprise. She wore a black silk hernani, in which satiny bands alternated with lace-like stripes, while for only ornament she had at the

half low-neck a big dagger set with flat slabs of beryl. Her white skin was warm enough in tone to bear the pale green, while her superb hair and the elegance of her figure made the costume wonderfully effective.

"It is n't everybody, Mrs. Ranger," she returned smiling, "that has your good fortune of being independent of dress. If I looked well in whatever I put on, I'd be content to wear sack-cloth."

"You'd adorn it," declared Mr. Ranger with his old-school bow; and the party went in to dinner in the pleasantest humor.

Gilbert looked up with eager eyes as Olive entered the dining-hall between Mr. and Mrs. Ranger, and he hoped to meet her glance. She passed his table chatting, however, and gained her own seat without looking at him. She was fully aware that his eyes were fixed on her face, and it cost her so much of an effort not to return his glance, that she exaggerated the effect upon him of her neglect, and felt that he must be hurt. To measure in this way is neither rare nor exclusively feminine. The result in this case was that when, after dinner, Gilbert asked Olive to walk with him she consented, by way of making amends for having refused to meet his eyes, although she had made up her mind not to go out with him should he ask her. She

would go no farther than the piazza, it is true, and they paced up and down on the shoreward side, seeing the reflections of the sunset die away, the silhouette of the absurd little temple-like summer-house perched on Friar's Head fade into indistinctness, the lights gleam out at Eastport and Lubec across the bay, and the soft dusk of the August twilight deepen over sea and land.

The other young men of the house were for the most part in the smoking-room, where an animated discussion was in progress over the details of a yacht which was being built for one of the men. Even those who already owned boats most disinterestedly offered advice tending to increase the speed and safety of the new sloop, while still each held religiously to the faith that when completed, she would be outsailed by his own particular craft. A group of girls clustered in the bend of the wide piazza, and as Gilbert and Olive approached them in their walk up and down they once and again caught scraps of light talk. Through the windows, the pair saw, as they passed to and fro, the older ladies; and Mrs. Van Orden was perfectly well aware that the sight of her continued promenade with the tall youth by her side was hardly likely to awaken sentiments of approval in the minds of these spectators.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Are you never tired?" she asked Gilbert.

"You talk as if tramping over the Alps night and day for a month were the merest trifle. Your energy is appalling. When you get to my advanced age you will be glad to take things more quietly."

He laughed lightly.

"You disprove the rule that women are always determined to conceal their age," he said.

"Oh, no," she returned, smiling upon him, and glancing again to the water where still lingered the last vanishing tinge of the rose which had glowed in the sunset. "From my contemporaries I conceal my years jealously; but you know I regard you in the light of a son. Now, Phœbe, who is seventeen, - just think, I was married at her age; I ought to have been shut up in the nursery closet instead! - Phæbe probably would n't tell you her age with half the nonchalance I do. You see," she went on, as they turned at the end of the piazza most remote from the laughing group of girls, "I have always liked boys from my wicked youth, and I do still; and as I never had one of my own I am forced to adopt one."

She knew her words would jar on her companion, but she deliberately intended that they should. She was assured that it was her duty to bring the boy back to the footing of commonsense friendship, and nothing occurred to her as

more likely to accomplish this than to keep plainly before him the disparity of their ages.

"You will talk nonsense sometimes," Gilbert returned, with manner as buoyant as ever. "Age is so different in different people. Why, you are not as old by twenty years as Miss Kellogg, and she can't be more than nineteen or twenty."

"No," Olive admitted, smiling, "I am certainly not as old as Clare Kellogg; but then I never should be if I lived to be a hundred."

"Why, I have an uncle," pursued Hampton, coming boldly on to dangerous ground, "who married a woman twenty years older than he is; and you never saw a happier couple. Aunt Louise is as young as he is to all appearance."

"And he is as old as she," Mrs. Van Orden answered with sudden gravity.

They had neared the girls as Gilbert spoke, and she waited until they had turned again and walked out of hearing before she continued.

"Never make a mistake like that, Gilbert," she said with the utmost seriousness. "Never marry a woman older than yourself, and especially one who is much older. It is a dangerous thing to do, and almost always a disastrous thing. I have been a widow these fifteen years, and a widow has in many respects a better

chance to observe life than anybody else. I have seen a great many marriages of all sorts, and I never knew one permanently happy where the wife was much the husband's senior. I don't say," she went on, although he tried to interrupt, "that it is not possible; but it is certainly so improbable that the risk is too great. No woman who loved a man generously would marry him if he were a dozen years her junior; and if she should she must always live in dread of the time when he would know he had made a mistake."

"But if he could not be happy without her," broke in Gilbert impetuously; "if he—"

He stopped in his eagerness and turned to face her. She put up her arm and pointed towards the lights of Lubec.

"Look over there," she said.

Mechanically he obeyed her, and she added in a low voice, —

"Don't you see, you silly boy, that those girls will think we are having a scene. You get excited too easily."

She resumed her walk, and he fell into step with her in silence. The abrupt transition of her tone and manner had effectually silenced him.

"I must go in now," Olive said as they came to the southern end of the piazza,

"I promised to be Mr. Ranger's partner at whist."

The night wind was beginning faintly to blow, and it fanned his hot cheeks as he stood with his hand on the piazza-railing after she had left him. Manton and West, on their way to the billiard-room, called to him to join them, but he refused. He wanted to get away by himself and think over what Olive had said. He vaulted over the railing to the ground below, only realizing how much of a leap he was taking when he alighted somewhat shaken on the ground below, and strode off through the grass, already damp with dew, toward the steps which lead down the bluffs to the shore and the floats.

"Are you going to row?" called Hitty Mayho from the piazza. "If you are I wish you'd take us."

"Yes, all of us," chimed in Kate Hatherway. "There are only seven here. That is just a nice boat-full."

"The risk is too great," he replied, turning but hardly pausing. "I might take the responsibility of two or three, but I can't run the chance of depriving Campobello of all its youth and beauty at one fell swoop."

And he hurried on his way.

"Why didn't you remind him," asked Clare

Kellogg, spitefully, "that Mrs. Van Orden was n't here?"

"Because," Kate Hatherway retorted, "Mrs. Van Orden did not take all the politeness of the place with her when she went in."

## V.

Some CERTAIN WHIMSICAL SEA-FANCY.

Youth and Age, iv. 5.

THERE was but the merest rippling breath of wind over the water as Gilbert pulled his boat toward the point upon which stands the Owen, picturesque on its shrubby promontory. At first he rowed with a vigor which sent the boat spinning through the dark water, amid which here and there gleamed phosphorescent sparks, like fire-flies in a moonless night. He was not yet ready to think; he must vent his excitement in strong exertion, and he had shot along past the weirs and clustering fishhouses of the Pool before he slackened his speed. Then he suddenly drew in his oars, letting the boat run forward as long as her momentum lasted, and then go drifting idly with the tide and the current.

He seated himself in the bottom of the skiff, leaning his back against the seat and clasping his hands behind his head. The dusk was shutting down darkly, and the lights shone from the village, which had its beginnings outside the park-gates while the Owen mansion was still the seat of a half-feudal lord. The outlines of the shore were hazy and indistinct, save where the profile of the promontory before him showed sharply against a pale streak of sky which stretched along the north with ominous foreshadowing of coming bad weather. The boat drifted with wavering sidelong motion toward the darker shadows of the rocky shore, yielding itself to the swell of the little waves lapping with mellow crispness against its sides. Now and then a night-bird flew heavily overhead; now and then a dog barked on shore or from East-port across the bay came the sound of a bell or a whistle, mellowed in its way over the water.

The night influences softened and soothed him without his being consciously aware of them. The faint wind which just stirred his hair cooled his hot cheeks and was like a calming hand laid upon his forehead; the lisp of the water lapping against the boat was pleasant in his ears, and the darkness seemed to form a retreat in which he might rest and consider. The measureless calm of the night and the sea and the sky whose stars were waveringly reflected in the water, surrounded and filled him with a sense of peace and of security.

He could not mistake the import of Olive's words; and yet, with the obstinate human in-

stinct of self-deception, he said to himself that after all they might be meant but to test him. His love was too ingenuous, too boyish, for him fully to understand the force of her reasoning. It was more reverence and comradeship than passion. It was of the growing boy's heart; that outreaching which is all vague desires, which has no true understanding of itself; that passion which is rather for love than for a definite object, despite the fact that one woman may seem to embody all it seeks. It was a throbbing, troubled unrest of the growing man into whose eyes shone the first glow which precedes the rising of the sun of love, dazzling, yet futile. Had he been experienced enough to realize the inadequacy of his love for Olive, this feeling would not have been possible. He regarded marriage with as little real comprehension of what it meant of its blending of life with life, of the requirements it makes upon head and heart and hand, upon body and no less upon soul - as he would have had of the most profound mysteries of occult science into which neophyte ever longed to be initiated.

And yet, with the egotism of youth, he assumed that his passion was the one important thing in the world. He was consumed as by a flame by the belief that its failure would leave life waste and desolate and null. He set his

teeth together and drew in a deep, long breath, trembling from very desperate resolution that he would not fail, — that he could not fail. He could not bring himself to believe that all this happy summer had been knitting him more and more closely to the woman he loved only that now they should be torn apart by cold and hackneyed conventionalities. He scorned the warning Olive had given him, and almost he rebelled against her for having spoken it. He clung the more determinedly to his theory that she must be merely proving him, because he could hardly believe her in earnest and not blame her.

He recounted to himself all the events of the day. He reproached himself that he had not spoken in the wood; and instead of perceiving from Olive's words on the piazza that he had escaped a danger and been spared the pain of a rejection, he felt that by neglecting to put his passion into speech he had given untoward fate a chance to oppose this obstacle in his way. He felt so strongly the stress of the declaration which he had been ready to speak, yet had not made, that the tears sprang in his eyes. He reflected bitterly, with boyish inconsequence which added a touch of the pathos children and animals rouse by their wistfulness under sufferings which they cannot understand, on the

pleasure he had felt in thinking of taking Olive to his home, of showing her his dogs, and of the particular horse he had meant for her to ride. Almost more than by the thought of losing her was he grieved by this disappointment.

On their way to Schooner Cove that afternoon, he had said to Mrs. Van Orden,—

"I think I shall go to Europe this winter; that is, if—"

"I wish I were going," she had answered.
"I have n't been for seven years. But there is Phœbe, you know."

She had not asked what the important condition might be upon which depended his going; and as she had at that moment whipped up her horse he supposed she had not heard the "if" with which his sentence ended. Now he wondered if she had understood; and if so, whether she had intended to try him or to warn him not to forget that she already had family ties. He was divided between the feeling that Olive read him perfectly, and the doubt whether she after all had been conscious of his love and his desire to press the claims of his affection.

The more he considered the situation, the more hopelessly confused he became. Nothing was clear to his mind except the fact that he must win Olive's love; that it was impossible in

the very nature of things to abandon hope; that whatever she or even fate might do to prevent, he must succeed, — because failure was so intolerable at once and so inconceivable.

The evening grew darker around him. The little waves looked black and glassy where the stars shone on them. He let the boat go as it would, and it drifted slowly into the dense shadows of the shore. He heard voices on the shore; he even caught irrelevant scraps of talk sounding across the water, and from time to time some homely phrase wove itself into his troubled revery as if he comprehended it by a sort of double consciousness. It was growing so late that the lights were disappearing in the houses of the more thrifty and earliest-retiring of the fisher-folk, when the sound of voices and of laughter told him that a boat-load of young people from the Tyn-y-coed was coming in his direction. His first thought was to take to his oars and escape. His next to lie where he was, trusting to the sheltering shadow of the trees on the shore. He heard Hitty Mayho singing one of the old ballads in which she delighted.

" 'There was a youth, and a well beloved youth,' "

sang Hitty in her clear young voice.

Somebody interrupted, although what was said Gilbert did not hear or heed; but a burst

of laughter followed, mingled with the sound of the oars as the boat advanced.

"' And he was a squire's son,' "

continued the singer;

" 'He loved a bailiff's daughter dear, That lived in Islington.'"

"Don't you know what sort of a girl a bailiff's daughter would be?" Kate Hatherway's voice commented. "Can't you imagine the kind of girl that has red hair and always wears chinchilla fur?"

"Oh, you are way off there," Gilbert heard West retort, his voice falling into a rhythm which showed that he was rowing, "'cause this bailiff's daughter was rigged out in long kid gloves and all the delicacies of the season."

The boat was now so near that Hampton could hear perfectly whatever was said, and as he had no thought that he was likely to overhear anything not intended for his ears he had no scruples about remaining quiet. Turning his head he could see the phosphorescent drops as they fell from the oars, and the fiery line of the blades as they dipped into the water.

"'Yet she being coy, would not believe That he did love her so,'"

sang Hitty, continuing her song.

"She probably was not a widow," was West's comment.

Gilbert started as if he had been struck in the face. He hardly restrained himself, in the heat of his sudden indignation and anger, from calling out. Hot blushes burned on his cheeks, and he trembled with the intensity of his feeling. He experienced a horrible sense of shame as if he had been the cause of his love's name being dishonored. He quivered with all the abnormal sensitiveness of his character, while all the chivalry of his heart sprang at once to arms. The boat with its laughter and song floated away into the darkness, marking its way with a pale golden track of "ineffectual fire," and leaving Gilbert full of a bitterness of which the intensity was absurd when the cause was considered, yet which was none the less genuine.

The sorrows of a child and of a lad in his first love can hardly be told without seeming amusing, because their causes rather than the suffering itself are present to the mind, and the hearer judges these by the standards of age and of their absolute importance. Every man estimates his woes by his experience, and to one who has never known the vehement cruelty of life, those sorrows appear overwhelming which to souls more forlornly wise seem so trifling as to merit only laughter. It is not by its cause but by its

completeness that anguish must be measured. If as years increase intensity of pain increased with the importance of the events which cause our sufferings, what mortal would be able to endure it?

Fortunately, Gilbert with all his sensitiveness was not without a strong vein of common-sense, which reasserted itself after the first moment of indignant pain. He could not but recognize that West's words might be simply a casual remark, careless and meaningless, and bearing no relation whatever to himself or to Mrs. Van Orden. He was well enough acquainted with Burt's habit of attempting always to be facetious, and surely it was absurd to suppose this random remark of more weight than the majority of his light talk. He leaned back in an easy attitude again, relaxing his muscles, and forcing himself to smile there in the dark, as if it were necessary to prove by his manner how sure he was that West had not been thinking of him.

Yet he began seriously to reflect for the first time upon the light in which the world would look upon a marriage between himself and Olive Van Orden. Hitherto he had at most contented himself with protesting inwardly that he did not care what people said; but now it was not only brought home to him that he did care, but he realized that in simple justice to her he was bound to consider how people would regard such a match.

He sprang up suddenly, shaking himself as if he would clear himself from the entanglement of the unwelcome thoughts which beset him; and seizing the oars he pulled out into the bay. He found a certain pleasure in feeling the waves increase under the boat, and a joy in running against the incoming tide. He rowed past the landing below the Tyn-y-coed far enough from the shore so that the bluffs did not conceal the house with its long rows of lighted windows. He saw a gleam in the chamber which he knew to be occupied by Mrs. Van Orden, and a pang shot through him that he had not as usual bidden her good-night. He struck off toward the Friar, - the great bowlder that in the semblance of a giant monk stands sentinel at the southern entrance of the bay. The thoughts aroused by what he had overheard worked in his head. He found himself fighting down the consciousness of how Mrs. Bodewin Ranger would look with utter disfavor upon Olive, if he could persuade the latter to consent to an engagement; of the grieved disapproval of Mrs. Wilson; of the bitter sneers of Mrs. Kellogg. His mind ran on despite his effort not to follow this train of thought, and dwelt upon the effect the news of such a betrothal would have upon his friends at home. He could see the pursed-up lips with which the elderly cousin who kept house for him would talk the matter over with her gossips. He even reflected that West and Manton, both of whom he found in a way comrades to his liking, would look upon him as a victim; and the wound in his vanity was the most severe stab of all. To be viewed with disapprobation, to meet the disapproval of old friends was bad enough; but all the boyish pride in his heart rebelled at the idea of enduring also their pity.

Then, with a sudden pang of remorse, he realized that it was the presence in his own mind of some sort of a vague doubt which had made it possible for West's chance remark so to sting him. He was half-conscious that had he not been on the defensive the words would not have come to him as a challenge.

Never in his whole life, although he was a lad more given than most to introspection, had Gilbert so closely studied his inner self, his emotions and his desires, as he did to-night. He grew in feeling older in a few hours than under ordinary circumstances he might have advanced in years; and yet so little did he comprehend either himself or human nature that on this night when the first frost fell upon the glorious tree of his love, and the doubt began which must in the

end overwhelm it like early snows, he went to his room and his bed at length, fully convinced that he had thought it all out, and that he could not live or be happy without Olive Van Orden's love.

## VI.

A Woman with a Song wrung his Soul.

Youth and Age, v. 2.

IT rained next day in a tempestuous, unexpected fashion, as if the order had been given suddenly but was to be obeyed heartily, notwithstanding all lack of preparation. People in general at the Tyn-y-coed took the storm good-naturedly enough; but Gilbert inwardly raged that the last day he was to have with Olive undisturbed by the presence of her daughter should be thus spoiled. He had promised himself at least a last ride, and he hoped much from the conversation which might be possible between the setting out and the return home. Now, instead of trotting merrily through the shady roads, stopping at Cold Spring to drink, lying in the dry grass at the top of some cliff with the sweet sea air and the sweeter presence of Mrs. Van Orden combining to intoxicate him, he was forced to get his violin and play duets with Clare Kellogg, according to a promise made long since, and more than once evaded.

Although he had promised faithfully to play

with Miss Kellogg upon the first rainy morning, Gilbert had no real intention now of redeeming his promise; and had it not been for Olive he might have escaped. Soon after breakfast Gilbert was standing by the fireplace in the hall, before which had gathered a group of young people, jesting and fencing as usual. Kate Hatherway and Andrew Manton were arguing about the terms of some trifling wager made the evening before, while Hitty Mayho and Burt West were alternately appealed to by both sides, and readily agreed to the most contradictory statements with a cheerful disregard of all pretence of consistency.

"It's no use," Manton declared at last. "Burt has professed himself ready to swear that we are both wrong, and Miss Mayho acknowledges we are both right, so I don't see how we are to settle it."

"You might leave it to me," Gilbert said. "I was n't there at all, and so of course I am perfectly unprejudiced."

"There is something in that," Andrew returned, "only that Miss Hatherway unblushingly announces her intention of bribing all my witnesses; so you could n't remain unbiased long."

"It would have been friendly to put me in the way of getting the bribe at least. What was it to be,—a tennis cap?" "No," answered Kate, emphatically, holding up the cap she was crocheting out of dull-blue silk. "If I ever get this detestable thing done, I'll never to the end of my life begin another."

"You'll be too lazy to make your own mistakes the first thing you know," West put in, leaning forward to give the sulky fire a punch with the tongs he held.

"Don't talk of laziness," she retorted. "Every rainy day this summer you've said you were going to work on your German condition, and you have n't opened a book yet."

"You should n't be so fascinating; besides, a fellow can't be expected to dig all the time," was Burt's rather insufficient excuse. "The truth is," he continued, nodding his head with an air of profound wisdom, "I made a great mistake when I took a German elective, anyway. If I had it to do over again I'd take some dead language; I don't believe it would be so likely to get away from you as a live one."

"The only reason Burt took a German elective anyway," Manton explained, as his chum heaved a prodigious sigh of self-pity, "was because he got it mixed up in his head with dancing."

Both Kate and Hitty began to say something about his receiving fewer favors than he had expected, and then reproached each other for indulging in so obvious a pun; while West made a worse one by grumbling that at least he had been called up often enough.

"Have you seen Mrs. Van Orden?" inquired Clare Kellogg, coming out of the parlor into the hall. "She asked me to wait for her when she went upstairs, and what has become of her?"

As if in answer to her question, Olive at that moment appeared on the stairs, carrying a big book of sonatas. Gilbert recognized it at a glance, and a flush of vexation came into his face. He was already angry with the weather and at not being able to have Olive to himself; but surely she need not have forced him to play duets with Clare Kellogg. He said to himself that he detested the latter, and for the moment he was almost angry with the widow, although immediately there followed remorse for being so.

"I want you and Mr. Hampton to play that fifth sonata," Mrs. Van Orden said, coming down to them. "We really must decide what you are to play at the entertainment."

As she spoke she shot Gilbert a half-glance which brought him at once to her side, and made him ready to do anything she required; and before he had time to devise any means of escape he was sent after his violin and found himself engaged for the morning, as Olive had intended that he should be.

The widow had dreaded the day, and unlike Gilbert she found the stormy weather greatly to her liking, since it simplified so much her plans for keeping the lad from another confidential conversation at present. She took her seat with her embroidery among the ladies in the parlor; and Mrs. Bodewin Ranger, who was shrewd and worldly-wise enough to appreciate the fact that the duet-playing had been cleverly managed by Olive, offered a reward of merit by making a place for her by her side on one of the bamboo sofas with the utmost amiability.

The one thing in all the world which Clare Kellogg did well was her music. She inherited from her father a passionate love for it, and had she been allowed to follow the natural bent of her inclinations, she might have made a very respectable place for herself in the ranks of professional pianists, crowded as they are. She had instead been forced by her mother into society and attempts at husband-getting, which, to do her justice, were not greatly to her taste. The one time when Gilbert liked Clare was when she was at the piano. He was no less fond of music than she; and while his violin-playing had less finish than her own unusually polished execution, he yet played extremely well for a young amateur, - having a good ear and much natural talent, formed by the best instruction.

His good-nature returned as he played. He and Miss Kellogg got on admirably together; and when they had gone through the sonata there was talk of their playing at an entertainment to be given in the dining-hall at the Owen for the benefit of some local charity, it hardly needed the applause and the requests of the listeners to induce Hampton to continue. One thing succeeded another, — the tender pathos of Mendelssohn, the full humanity of Beethoven, and so on to the languishing, marionette passion of the Boccherini minuet, which set Mrs. Bodewin Ranger's small foot tapping in time with the remembrance of the gayeties of her far-away youth.

"Your daughter does play delightfully," she observed graciously to Mrs. Kellogg, who was so much pleased with the approbation that she refrained from saying anything disagreeable for the entire forenoon.

It was astonishing how quickly the morning sped away; and not until, after playing for a couple of hours, the pianist announced that her back was tired, did it occur to anybody to consider the fatigue of the performers at all. Amid a chorus of mingled thanks and self-reproaches for having allowed her to go on so long, Clare left the piano and Gilbert prepared to put up his violin, while somebody suggested that there

ought to be some vocal music to conclude the concert. Thereupon Olive was urged to sing, and although she disliked to sing in public, she sat down at the piano. She sang Rubinstein's setting of "Du bist wie eine Blume," with a pathos which brought tears into the eyes of her lad lover, already wrought to a highly sensitive mood by the music he had been playing. He paused with his violin still in his hand, forgetting to put it in its case, absorbed in the music. As the song ended he bent down to adjust the instrument in its box and to conceal his face, since he felt that his looks must betray an emotion he would not on any account be willing to discover. He was glad that Olive almost immediately began another song, and broke the spell of sadness she had cast over him.

"Mrs. Van Orden," asked Hitty Mayho, coming to the parlor door from the group which still kept its place about the fire in the hall, "Mr. West wants you to sing that German folksong you used to sing when you first came,—the one he was so taken with."

The mischief in Hitty's face and the instant hush which followed her words were sufficient evidence that more lurked beneath her words than was apparent on the surface. A flush sprang into Hitty's cheeks as all eyes were turned toward her, and she would have given much to recall her request. Burt West had

dared her to ask for this song, and she had sprung up in her usual impulsive fashion without stopping to consider what she was doing. She blushed more deeply still as Burt West gave a slight significant cough behind her, but she stood her ground, although her aunt, Mrs. Crawford, to whom fell the duty of chaperoning Hitty and Kate, looked up at her with a reproachful expression which said plainly enough that although it might not be clear what her offence was, she was evidently doing something she should not.

Olive colored also, but she was angry with herself as she felt her cheeks glow with the heat of tell-tale blood.

"I don't think I remember it," she said coldly, turning as if to rise from the piano.

Then with the inconsistency of her sex, she wheeled back again and began to play the prelude of the song for which Hitty had asked, while that young woman, with an air somewhat shame-faced, returned to her seat in the hall. The song was one which Olive had chanced to sing one evening early in the summer, before Gilbert came to Campobello, and to which for some unexplained reason, Burt West had taken a fancy. He unhesitatingly, in slangy compliment, pronounced it "boss," and for a day or two had teased for its repetition. It was a Suabian folk-song, of which Mrs. Van Orden

sang an English version made by Dr. Westacott, the friend who was to escort her daughter from Mt. Desert. She had never attached the slightest importance to the trifle beyond the fact that the air was strange and pleasing; but at this moment she could not help perceiving how significant it must be in its application, especially after being asked for in this conspicuous way. It at once occurred to her, however, that she was given an opportunity of checking Gilbert's passion which she ought not to let pass, even though she ran the risk of hurting him. She felt that the remedy was heroic, yet she was far from appreciating how deeply she wounded her friend, as with strangely-mingled feelings she sang, -

## A LAD'S LOVE.

Oh, a lad's love and a lad's eyes
They both are deep to see;
Yet out of both the light dies
As sunshine leaves the lea.
For a lad's love's not heart's love,
Though bright may be its glow,—
So soon it departs; love
That lives is not so.

Ah, a lad's love and a lad's eyes
Both in a glance they shine;
Though for them both the tears rise
And both are half divine,

Yet a lad's love 's not heart's love,
Not fire it is, but glow,—
So soon it departs; love
That lives is not so.

Having begun her song with the intention of touching Gilbert, Olive had yet not sung a line before she repented, and regretted her act. She did not, however, think it of especial moment, and she was aware that nothing could be worse than not to carry it through with the most indifferent manner she could command; and she sang it to the end.

"It is rather silly stuff," she said carelessly, as she ended, turning on her stool to face the company; "but the melody of all those old folk-songs is very quaint and pleasing."

Somebody murmured assent, but Gilbert, with eyes in which the reproach and pain cut her to the quick, took up his violin-case and strode out of the room without a word. He felt as if his most sacred and private feelings had been held up to ridicule before the whole company; that Olive had betrayed him to the laughter of all the house. He felt the smiles of the group by the fireside in the hall, which he did not see as he hurried by them with head erect, looking straight before him and moving with an air which was absurdly melodramatic, though not devoid of dignity. He naturally exaggerated

the whole situation, as any boy would magnify its importance; and for the moment he felt as if he could never face his companions again. He even looked about his chamber when he reached it, with a half-formed intention of beginning at once to pack. He raged in wild anger against Olive, against fate, against life. He not only felt that Olive did not love him, but he suffered the deeper pain of feeling that his ideal was broken, and that she was not what he had believed her. Rage and despair consumed him by turns. All the strong confidence of his love was taken away in an instant, and his joyous dream lay in ruins about him.

He flung himself upon the bed, writhing with mingled anguish and impatience. It would have been difficult to tell whether he felt the more outraged or sorrowful. He delivered himself up to burning regrets with that desperate self-abandonment which is the luxury of youthful woe, before the head has so far mastered the heart as to force the latter to listen to reason ere it is so utterly exhausted that logic is of no moment. He tossed for an hour repeating over and over to himself that for him life was done; that all the possibilities of joy were exhausted. He assured himself that even had he proposed and been rejected, he should have been less hopeless than now when she had not only mocked at his

passion, but done it openly. He did not for a moment question that to every one who heard Mrs. Van Orden's song it had been as full of personal meaning as to him; and he boiled with angry humiliation at the thought.

And so he tormented himself until, from the sheer exhaustion of so powerful and unwonted emotions, he fell asleep. The rain on the windows grew fainter in his ears, and his sorrows merged into the kindred unrealities of dreams. And being young and healthy he slept the sleep of virtue and youth, and did not wake until the afternoon was well worn.

Then, when he had cooled his head with abundant cold water and began again his contemplation of life, he found himself still sad, still pained, but above all else for that particular moment he found himself hungry, and it lacked more than an hour of dinner-time.

## VII.

TAKEN IN A NET OF WORDS.

Youth and Age, ii. 5.

GILBERT went to the window and looked

It was still raining, although the clouds were lighter and gave promise of breaking away. He regarded the wet fields, a cottage fence into which was woven the Indian word "Kaloolemuqu" (welcome), in letters a couple of feet high, the woods beyond, looking cold and autumnal under the gloomy sky. The unsentimental thought which came into his mind was that to-morrow mushrooms would be plenty, and that Manton and Dr. Curtis would go prowling about after them.

He turned to the glass to arrange his toilet, and as he stood brushing his hair he suddenly found himself humming,—

"'But a lad's love's not heart's love."

He tried to look lugubrious, but his sleep had restored him to his usual sunniness of humor,

and he made a grimace at his reflection in the mirror and laughed instead. He did not realize that when once a man is able to play at heart-break his grief is not inconsolable; but he found himself, by an unreasonable reaction, in the best of spirits. He walked down the corridor from his room with a buoyant step and air, which made Mr. Bodewin Ranger, who chanced to meet him, look after him and sigh, half with envy, half regret, for his youth left near a half century behind him.

The young folk with whom Gilbert usually consorted were in the bowling-alley, and thither he betook himself, his ears being greeted on his approach by the sound of laughter and the noise of rolling balls.

"Oh, here's Mr. Hampton," Kate Hatherway said, as he appeared. "He always takes my part. I wish you'd be kind enough to hold Mr. West's head down among the pins, so that I could hit it once or twice, to make him more civil."

"I'd be perfectly willing to hold my head among the pins myself," was Burt's retort. "That is the only really safe place when you are rolling."

"Come, Kittie," Miss Mayho said; "we are getting more than our usual share of compliments to-day. That is as bad as what Mr.

Manton just said about me. He told me," she explained, turning to Gilbert, "that if I could stand back-to and think of both sides of the alley at once, he thought I might bring down a pin occasionally."

"It would be presumptuous on my part to say he is wrong," Hampton replied. "Who are partners?"

"I should think you might tell by the way the abuse is distributed," answered Mrs. Van Orden, who sat in an armchair crocheting on Kate's blue tennis-cap. "I am simply umpire."

West sent a big ball spinning down the alley in a strange curve, which somehow brought all the pins down, after looking as if it would leap off to one side instead.

"You do that every time," Hitty protested. "Umpire, has he any right to make a ball look as if it was going off the side, and then get a ten-strike?"

"Certainly not," decided the umpire promptly and impartially; "none whatever."

"When I send a ball on one side," continued Hitty, "and I generally do, — it stays there; and his ought to."

"Then he should add the strike to your score, for his attempt to take an unfair advantage," ruled the umpire.

Thereupon arose a great discussion, mingled

with much abuse of the umpire on the one hand, and a gallant defence on the other.

"For my part," Gilbert said at length to Mrs. Van Orden, "I don't think you are properly appreciated here. Come and roll a string with me; I'll give you half I make."

"You ought to give me more," she answered; "but I am so glad to be released from this tiresome cap, which actually gets smaller the more you work on it, that I'd roll upon any terms."

"I'm sure I never asked you to work on it," retorted Kate.

"If she is half as tired of seeing it as I am," Manton observed languidly, "she must want to get it done."

"Mr. Manton, I am delighted that you are so much in love with that cap. I'll give it to you when it is done."

"You've given it to me already," put in West. "Do you suppose I'm going to have him filling my virtuous cap with his wicked ideas?"

"Ideas of any sort," Hitty commented, wetting her fingers and carefully selecting a light ball, "would be strangely out of place in a cap that belonged to you. Ugh! Do see that pesky ball go skylarking off the alley! I don't believe the alley is even."

"It always gets uneven when ladies come to roll. I expect it's the fascination of the sex.

Now see me kill the small boy. Whoop! Ten strike!"

"Don't be so noisy, Burt," protested Manton.

"It is worse than always trying to be so very funny."

Meantime Olive and Gilbert had begun to bowl in the next alley but one. As he handed her the first ball she looked into his eyes, half-appealingly, half-curiously, remembering the glance of intense feeling he had shot at her as he left the parlor in the morning. She was wholly at a loss to understand his mood, and it piqued her feminine curiosity to find him in spirits evidently so good. She was even perhaps unconsciously a little disappointed, and ready to exercise her powers of fascination to solve a puzzle for which she had not been prepared.

In a few moments she made a spare, and as Gilbert marked it down she said, standing by the blackboard and watching him,—

"Where have you been all day?"

"Asleep," he answered, turning upon her a smile which showed plainly enough that he was glad to be able to offer so good a proof of indifference.

"Ah, that is a capital fashion of getting through a dull day."

He turned to take up his ball without replying. He was learning bits of worldly wisdom,

and it had occurred to him that his heroic exit of the morning had been a piece of boyish folly, to be covered and forgotten if possible. A lad's first love is after all only a stage of growth, in which progression goes on more rapidly than usual; and as an educational process, it certainly has its value.

Olive was too wise to pursue the conversation, and they went on with their play, talking of nothing more important than the strikes and the score, until they finished the game.

"You have beaten, as usual," Olive said, as her companion added up the last figures of the score. "Shall we roll another string?"

"No," he replied. "I want to talk to you." Let's go for a walk. It's done raining, and there is half an hour before I can get any dinner. I don't know," he added, as she regarded him in evident hesitation, "but I shall die of starvation on the way. I slept over lunch, and I am nearly famished."

The entire absence of either anger or sentiment in his words and manner made Olive accept his invitation, despite the danger she might have known to lie in the proposal of a tête-a-tête. She was mystified by his mood, and she would not have been a woman had she not been curious to see what tone he would take in talking with her. She reflected, moreover, that the

brevity of the time would forbid the walk's being a long one.

"Very well," she assented; "I have been in the house all day, and I will go for fifteen minutes, just to get a breath of fresh air. I will go and get my overshoes."

"I will be on the piazza," he said.

The sky was wild and dark, although rifts of silvery gray showed here and there amid the broken and inky rack. Gilbert buttoned his coat about him and paced up and down the piazza in the wind until Mrs. Van Orden appeared, and then the pair set off down the road in the direction of the Owen. A moment's walk brought them into the shelter of the woods which come down to both sides of the road, and which kept off the wind blowing freshly from the bay.

"How good it is to get out-of-doors, after being mewed up in the house all day!" Olive said, as they began the descent of the hill, which plunges downward pretty sharply. "I am so sorry it is n't pleasant for Phœbe! I do hope it won't be so rough she will wait over a boat."

Instead of replying, Gilbert walked on in silence; and glancing up at his face, Olive saw that his whole expression had become gloomy and frowning. Partly, perhaps, it was his

hunger, and partly the allusion to her daughter's coming; but more than these was the sudden boyish revulsion of feeling which came over him as he recalled what he had wanted the opportunity to say to his companion. All the anger of the morning came back, and it returned unsoftened by sadness. He did not now feel wounded, but simply angry; and he nursed his wrath as he walked along in sullen silence.

Olive comprehended instantly that a scene was imminent; and before she could make any attempt to avert it he burst out.

"What did you sing that for this forenoon?" he demanded, drawing down his eyebrows fiercely.

"Sing what?" asked she, fencing to gain time.

- "That song."
- "I sang several."
- "You know which one I mean."
- "Which do you?"
- "You know you sang a song on purpose to make fun of me."

Olive bit her lip from sheer vexation. She had never had to deal with Gilbert in a mood like this; and his whole tone and manner were so boyish that she felt as if she were dealing with an unreasonable child, while yet she was forbidden to treat him as one. She was doubly

annoyed at the suddenness with which this change of temper had been sprung upon her, just when she was congratulating herself that she had been mistaken in supposing Gilbert to be offended in the forenoon, or that he had recovered from his pique.

"How foolish you are!" she replied, as lightly as she could. "Should I be likely to sing a song to make fun of you?"

"But you did," he persisted.

She would not again even attempt to evade his charge; and they went on their way down the hill in silence until they reached the bridge which at its foot spans an inlet from the bay, shallow now, from the lowness of the tide. Here Olive paused, and steadying herself against the rail, turned to face her companion.

"Come," she pleaded, "why do you want to be so uncomfortable? I sang that song half a dozen times before you came this summer, and Mr. West took a fancy to it."

"Then you do know what song I meant," he interrupted.

She flushed; but she continued, as if he had not spoken, —

"When it was asked for, why should n't I sing it?"

"You should, if you wanted to," he returned, not meeting her eyes, but intently regarding a hole he was digging with a stick he had picked up.

"But, Gilbert — Oh, dear! how perfectly unreasonable you are! Who else would ever have thought of applying that song to you?"

"They all did."

"What nonsense! And if they did, do you think it would have been better for me to make a scene by refusing to sing it?"

He threw away his stick, folded his arms, and looked her full in the face.

"Did n't you mean that song for me?" he asked.

She blushed in her own despite. She had seldom been placed in a situation so annoyingly awkward in her whole life; and a not unnatural vexation began to wax in her mind, that she should be thus brought to question by a mere boy. She could not honestly deny that she had had him in mind when she sang, and she had certainly no intention of entering into any explanation of the motives which had led her to take the course she had chosen. A red rose of anger began to burn in her cheek, but by a strong effort she still restrained herself.

"Come," she said, starting forward; "I think we had better go back. It is almost dinner-time," she added, with an endeavor to speak more lightly, "and you know that by your own

confession you are half beside yourself with hunger."

He placed himself in her way and arrested her.

"Wait," he returned hoarsely; "we may as well talk this out."

She regarded him an instant with eyes which fairly blazed with indignation and defiance; then some inner pang of conscience softened her look into one almost of pity. She laid her finger-tips on his arm beseechingly.

"Some other time," she pleaded. "We are both a little angry, and we have been too good friends to quarrel, — and that about nothing."

"No," persisted he, doggedly. "I am tired of waiting for another time. I cannot endure this any longer. I must talk to you now."

"Well, then," was Olive's only reply.

She leaned against the rude railing of the bridge once more, glancing quickly up and down the road to assure herself that they were unobserved; and clasping her hands loosely before her, she waited for him to speak. She was convinced that it was idle to attempt to escape at once, but she still hoped that by skilful fencing she could spare the boy the humiliation of an actual rejection.

"Why do you treat me so?" he demanded, not quite knowing how to begin, now that his opportunity had come.

"Since when has my treatment not pleased you; and what right have you to take me to task if it does not?"

Her self-possession confused him. His arms fell by his side, and he looked at her with a baffled and desperate gaze which touched her to the heart. She made one more effort to end the interview.

"It breaks my heart," she said, "to quarrel with you. I thought we understood each other so perfectly, as two good comrades should; and now it is hard to find that I have been mistaken. I shall never cease to blame myself if you are unhappy, for I am so much older I ought to have thought for you. Come; let's shake hands over all differences and be friends again. I am so sorry if I have hurt you, but you must forgive me. I am an old woman, and you are a boy; so I can afford to make advances."

He seized with both his the hand she extended. He made a stride toward her crushing her fingers in a grasp like iron.

"But I love you!" he cried.

She grew very white, but she did not flinch. She was filled with the bitterest self-reproach that she had brought the boy to this, and she struggled still to do what she might to save him even now.

"Yes," she answered, "and I love you. You

have been like a brother and a son in one to me all summer. We will hold hard to that affection. It is very dear to me."

The light faded from his eyes, and she saw the tears start. A sob choked him, and he could not speak; but he clung to her hand with a desperate clasp, as if all the world else were slipping from him. She drew her fingers gently out of his grasp.

"Come," she said, with a great assumption of cheerfulness, "we really must go back to the house. It is dinner-time, and Mrs. Kellogg will ruin her digestion inventing nasty speeches if she finds that you and I are off walking."

She led the way and he followed in silence. Half-way up the hill, in the gloomy road where the shadow of the trees made a premature twilight, they met one of the women of the island, who came sometimes to the Tyn-y-coed on one errand of service or another.

"Did you notice," Olive asked, after they had passed her, "that horrible mourning-brooch that woman had on? She told me the other day she had worn it for twenty-five years. Think of it! What can be the state of mind of a woman who can put on the same bosom-pin every day for twenty-five years!"

He made no reply, but he did show some faint attempts at a responsive smile; and Mrs.

Van Orden chatted as lightly as she could until they reached the piazza.

"You are not angry with me?" she asked wistfully, turning upon the steps to meet his eyes.

"Oh, no; not angry."

"I am so sorry we had a misunderstanding," she pursued, as they crossed the piazza; "I hate them."

"And I am sorry," he replied bitterly; "for of all the innumerable varieties of fools men make of themselves, it is more humiliating to find you're a sentimental fool than any other."

Olive looked at him in surprise at this inexplicable change of tone, but he opened the door for her, and with a gust of wind they entered the house just as people were going in to dinner.

There were tears in Olive's eyes as she hurried to her room to arrange her dress, but she murmured resolutely to herself, —

"'Yet a lad's love's not heart's love;'"

and the sentiment afforded her some comfort.

## VIII.

As LIKE AS SEA-WAVE AND SEA-WATER.

Youth and Age, iv. 3.

It was sunny and beautiful next morning, a fact in which Mrs. Van Orden rejoiced volubly, the other ladies offering congratulations in that serious manner in which trifles are treated at summer resorts. Quite a party went with the widow over to Eastport to meet the steamer, including Kate and Hitty, Manton, West, and Hampton. Gilbert's first impulse had been to be sulky and to remain at home; but sulking was by no means his habit, and he was learning the foolishness of giving way to his feelings. When Olive said very prettily, "Come, Gilbert, I want to show my best friend to Phæbe the very first thing," he made not even a pretence of resisting.

They were very gay on their run across the ferry, keeping up a constant interchange of that light badinage which can no more be set down on paper than the perfume of a flower can be painted. The drollery of what is said depends quite as often upon the manner as upon the

word; while the atmosphere which surrounds a merry company, the mutual incitement of good spirits and contagious laughter, have more to do with the enjoyment of this idle talk than any quality or circumstance more tangible. The trip from Campobello to Eastport by steamferry takes less than a score of minutes, but into this space the party crowded an almost incredible amount of mirthful talk.

"Is n't this a delightful day?" Olive said joyously. "Phœbe could n't have had a better one."

"Some people have luck in weather," Hitty observed profoundly.

"I never have luck in anything," Burt West retorted. "Here's my mother written me a letter of twelve pages, and eleven and seven-eighths of it devoted to my German condition."

"She probably thinks somebody in the family had better devote some time to it," Manton commented; "and she knows how little hope there is of your doing it."

"But it's a matter of principle with me," retorted West with whimsical seriousness. "I don't want to encourage the faculty to have their courses so hard. If there are enough men fail on an elective one year they'll make it easier the next, and I'm suffering for the good of my fellow-men; don't you see? If the boys would

only have some system about it and take things up in some sort of order, we'd get the whole scheme of studies down in a few years so that a bald-headed monkey could go through without conditions."

"That's an excellent idea, Burt," Manton observed, "just keep on and you'll get dropped, but all future generations will regard you as a prophet and a sage."

"Why is a bald-headed monkey more stupid than any other?" Mrs. Van Orden asked. "You always speak of a bald-headed monkey as the lowest form of intellect conceivable."

"Why, a bald-headed monkey has scratched all the hair off his head trying to think, don't you see; so he must be awfully stupid."

"Do you remember that Mr. Sefton who was here last year?" Kate asked. "You used elegantly to call him a bald-headed monkey."

"Oh, he made me tired," Burt declared slangily. "He was too thick-headed to live. Mrs. Kellogg says he's coming again this year."

"Is he? When?"

"In September, I believe. I shall take to my books when he comes."

"He must be something appalling," Olive laughed, "if he can drive you to anything so desperate as that."

The little waves rushed tumultuously against

the sides of the ferry-boat, which rejoiced in the appropriate name of "Emmet;" the islands and the headlands went by in lovely panorama; the wind blew softly up the bay, while the sky was as blue as a sapphire above, and blue as a sapphire below was the sea-water, save where the sunbeams thrust great slanting bars of beryl down into it close beside the boat. Lovely Lubec, with its houses climbing the hill toward the church at the top, while among its tree-tops showed picturesquely the masts of the shipping on the other side of the point, seemed hardly a stone's throw away in the bright clear air; while into the mouths of the several rivers which break with varied inlets the western and northern shores of Passamaquoddy Bay one and another coaster were slowly making way with black hulls and mottled sails. The air had that peculiar clearness which seems almost a brilliancy, as if like a diamond it were full of reflections; and even the farthest horizon separated its hills from the sky, which held itself far removed behind them.

The "Emmet" had reached the wharf at Eastport when the Portland steamer appeared coming through the Narrows, and they had not waited three minutes before Olive began to wave her handkerchief.

"There she is!" she cried, as excitedly as a

girl. "Don't you see her on the upper deck, close by the boat?"

All eyes looked toward the spot she indicated, and then Gilbert first saw Phæbe Van Orden, whose coming he had so dreaded. She so closely resembled her mother that the likeness was almost startling. She was really somewhat shorter, and seen close at hand her face was fresher and younger; but at a little distance one might, by any one not closely familiar with them, be mistaken for the other. Gilbert experienced a curious thrill, — a feeling which seemed almost a double consciousness. He seemed to see the woman he loved in two living forms. Mechanically he lifted his hat as the gentleman accompanying Miss Van Orden raised his; while he kept his eyes fixed upon the young girl with a sort of absorbed fascination.

As the steamer drew closer to the wharf, Miss Van Orden and her escort left their places to descend to the lower deck from which they were to land. Olive turned to Gilbert, her whole face alive with joyous excitement.

"There!" she cried. "That's Phœbe! Do you think she is like me?"

"She is your double."

"I hope she won't undo me. Oh, I am so glad she has come."

"She is perfectly lovely, Mrs. Van Orden,"

Hitty said. "Mr. West here is completely captivated."

"Did n't I say she was a stunner when I saw her at Bar Harbor?" Burt retorted. "'Spose I don't know a pretty girl when I see one?"

"Take care, Burt," Miss Hatherway admonished the enthusiastic young man, "you'll make Mrs. Van Orden jealous."

"Oh, I could n't be jealous of Phœbe," the widow protested, watching the gang-plank with eager regard.

Suddenly Olive precipitated herself upon the crowd before her, and then, finding that she could not possibly make her way through it, began waving her hand and her sunshade frantically toward her daughter, who had just appeared in the stream of people leaving the boat.

"Oh, why will people get in the way?" she cried, with pretty impatience. "They can never get through that crowd."

But the gentleman who had Miss Phœbe in charge was blessed with broad, strong shoulders, and although his hands were full of baggage, he managed to clear a passage through the press, by means of which the daughter was soon in her mother's arms. Olive kissed her fervently, with the tears springing to her eyes, — a fact which did not escape Gilbert's notice, although

he averted his glance quickly; and it touched him to witness so strong a proof of Mrs. Van Orden's fondness for her child.

"And how do you do?" Olive asked, putting out her hand to the broad-shouldered gentleman, while still with the other she clasped that of Phœbe, to whom she had not spoken a word.

"Oh, I always do," he responded, in a voice which had a richness that somehow gave one the feeling of jollity and Christmas cheer.

He had handed over the bags he carried to the faded-out-looking porter, and clasped her hand frankly and warmly.

"Miss Mayho, Miss Hatherway, this is my daughter," Olive went on, swinging round to them and getting quickly through the rather awkward ceremony of introducing a number of people; "and Phœbe, this is Mr. Manton; Mr. West; and here is my friend Mr. Hampton. Mr. West you met at Bar Harbor, I think."

"I beg pardon," Phœbe said, "that I did not recognize you."

"Oh," West retorted, "you 've grown so brown since I saw you, that you naturally would n't know me."

Phœbe's escort stood quietly while she was thus made acquainted with her mother's companions, and now his turn came.

"Miss Hatherway, may I present Dr. Westa-

cott?" Olive said, and so with the others; but when it came to Gilbert she laughingly changed the formula. "Dr. Westacott, Mr. Hampton," she said, "you have both the honor of knowing me; add to that the great happiness of being acquainted with each other."

"It is certainly a pleasure to me to meet Mr. Hampton," Dr. Westacott responded, holding out his hand to Gilbert, although he had merely bowed to the others. "Mrs. Van Orden has spoken of you so often that it is difficult to feel that we are perfect strangers."

Gilbert liked the frank and friendly eyes that met his own, and he returned the pressure of the other's hand with ready cordiality. Dr. Westacott's hair was touched with gray here and there, although he had not the appearance of being above forty at most; while the ready sparkle in his eye and the quick sympathy of his smile proved him to be one of those fortunate individuals upon whom fate has bestowed the rare treasure of a temperament which age would mellow but could not harden. There was a keenness and an intentness in its glance as it turned again to Olive, however, which somehow caused Hampton a momentary pang of jealous trouble; but in the bustle of getting the company on board the "Emmet," the looking after stray bits of baggage, the chatter and the questioning, this was quickly swept from his mind. When once more the little ferry-boat was jerkily cutting the water on its way back to Campobello, the lad was in as good spirits as if no twinge of jealousy, no shadow of doubt, had ever disturbed the serenity of his ill-starred wooing.

He sat directly opposite Phœbe Van Orden in the group gathered on the "Emmet's" deck, and although he was now able to see wherein she differed in appearance from her mother, he was still amazed by the close likeness between the two. The hair was the same. Both mother and daughter had great masses of superb auburn locks, fine and bright as red gold spun on a fairy distaff. Both had the same full brown eyes, and the same beautiful skin. They were curiously alike, too, in their ways of moving, of speaking, and of smiling; so that although Phœbe was somewhat smaller than her mother, she seemed only a fresh copy a little reduced in size. Phœbe's voice, however, Gilbert decided as he sat watching her, was different. It was clear where Olive's was rich, and she spoke now and then with a pretty air of mingled deference and imperiousness which was wonderfully fascinating. On the whole, although Gilbert assured himself that he could not forgive Miss Van Orden for coming to interfere with his pleasant relations with her mother, he laid in his mind

far more stress upon the conclusion that it was no wonder Olive was so fond of her daughter.

There were a great many questions to be asked and answered on the way across. All the details of the journey had to be recounted with much minuteness; the news from Bar Harbor told; the engagement of Elsie Dimmont to Dr. Wilson commented upon, since everybody knew it had been broken off and was now renewed again; while fragments of talk about all sorts of people and affairs came in after the irrelevant fashion peculiar to such discourse.

"You were mighty fortunate to sleep through it all," Hitty said, when Phœbe had told how good a night she had passed, despite the roughness left by the storm. "When there's any wind and I'm on the boat, it seems as if I should fly every minute."

"I can sleep through anything," Burt announced. "When I came down this year it was so rough the lee scuppers slammed every time the boat canted over, and I slept like a top through it all."

This jest was too nautical to be generally intelligible, but Dr. Westacott laughed.

"There's the Friar," Olive said to Phœbe, leaning over to point to the tall rock. "He's up to his knees in the water now, but at low-tide you can get round him if you don't mind scram-

bling over slippery rocks and running the risk of breaking your neck."

"That," began Burt, "is all -"

"Now don't!" Kate cried, putting up her hand warningly.

"Don't what?"

"Don't say it."

"You don't know what I was going to say."

"Nonsense; you were going to favor us with the inevitable pun about getting round the Friar. Hitty, you are keeping account; how many times has he said it this summer?"

"It was the other dress," Hitty answered, but I know it was over two hundred."

"What has the other dress to do with it?" asked Manton.

"Oh, I pull out one of the little red threads in the braid every time he says it, and I know by the number—"

"That are not there!" interrupted West, incorrigibly. "Did your family come from Cork?"

"She tells by those that are left, stupid,"
Kate retorted. "A man would n't, of course,
—it would be too deep for him; but it's simple
to us."

Gilbert was half attentive to this banter, half to Dr. Westacott and Olive. The former had said something to the widow which Hampton did not hear; but the reply came to him with distinctness.

"Of course," she said; "that is what I wrote you."

With a sudden pang of jealousy the youth remembered Dr. Westacott's greeting to himself on the wharf, and reflected that he might from those words have known that Mrs. Van Orden and the new-comer corresponded, since he knew they had not met since his own acquaintance with Olive began. A cloud came over his face; and when Phæbe asked him some question about one of the islands, he replied so coldly that she regarded him in amazement. She was by no means accustomed to being snubbed; and she formed in her mind conclusions concerning her mother's friend which by no means tended toward establishing him in her own good graces.

## IX.

HIS WITS BEWILDERED WITH YOUTH.

Youth and Age, i. 1.

"THIS," Mrs. Wilson said in her sunniest manner, "is an old woman's picnic, and you young people must be content to take a second place."

"I don't mind a second place," Kate Hatherway responded, "if it is n't at the second table.

I am so hungry that I could n't endure that."

"It is more like a hop than a picnic," Hitty confided to Burt. "That row against the rocks is just like the string of dowagers along the wall at an assembly."

"If my mother knew what sedate company I keep," returned West, "she would n't devote two thirds of her letters to urging me not to be a giddy young thing."

It was Monday, and the dwellers at the Tyny-coed had driven over to Head Harbor for a picnic, and the occasion was distinguished by the presence of a number of the elderly ladies. Even Mrs. Bodewin Ranger came very near joining the party, and although at the last moment she found it impossible really to participate in anything which possessed such possibilities of undignified situations as a picnic, she had sent her husband to adorn the occasion.

The weather was perfect, the drive over enchanting. Washed by the recent rain, the country was fresh and sweet; the woods showed no sign of summer wear, and as little of the approach of autumn. Everybody was in good spirits, and the festivity was going off delightfully.

An exception should perhaps be made in the case of Gilbert, whose spirits were not wholly serene. He had driven over in a carryall with Mrs. Van Orden, Phœbe, and Dr. Westacott, and although there was nothing to object to in this arrangement, he chafed that he could not be alone with Olive. All day Sunday she had been so absorbed with her daughter that he had hardly seen her, and he reflected bitterly how correct had been his foreboding that the arrival of Miss Van Orden would put an end to the previous pleasant confidential relations. was too unsophisticated to conceal his feelings, and although Olive made every effort to draw him out, he remained throughout the drive so silent that Phœbe inwardly pronounced him decidedly dull.

Once Head Harbor was reached, Olive abandoned in despair her efforts to bring Gilbert

to a more genial frame of mind. She and Dr. Westacott betook themselves to a seat on the rocks, where they overlooked the water, and talked or were silent with a perfect understanding which indicated long comradeship and intimate acquaintance. Gilbert threw himself sulkily upon the pebbles of the beach, while Phœbe devoted herself to Mr. Bodewin Ranger, much to that fine old gentleman's pleasure.

So much of the forenoon as remained after their arrival at Head Harbor had been passed in the occupations usual on such occasions; the skipping of stones, the exploration of the rocks, the accumulation of wild flowers which withered with discouraging rapidity, some sketching by those of the party possessed of that accomplishment, and a good deal of idling and light talk. The hour for luncheon had arrived, and the picnickers had gathered in the shadow of a high bank, scantily fringed with trees, the baskets had been opened, the tea made over a fire which Mr. Crawford and Burt West had kindled; and the meal, with its usual picturesque disregard of conventionalities was in progress.

"If you find an ant in your tea," asked Kate, "what do you do? Drink it?"

<sup>&</sup>quot;You consider its ways," answered Phæbe.

<sup>&</sup>quot;I've already considered its ways of getting

in; now I'd like to have a chance to study the way to get it out. I have n't any spoon."

"You might try Hampton," Burt West suggested under his breath.

"Hush!" Kate retorted in the same tone. Then aloud she added, "I'm dreadfully tired of poor puns."

This trivial piece of deception tickled Burt's fancy greatly, and he broke into a laugh full of glee.

"Mr. West has to relieve his spirits in some way," Mr. Ranger observed, smiling in condescending tolerance of the frivolity of youth.

"Yes," West retorted; "I overflow with spirits like a lager-beer fountain. The truth is," he added, as if he had given the subject the deepest consideration, "I feel so vivacious that I am confident I was intended for twins."

"It's such a pity you had n't been," Manton called, across the fire.

"Oh, no," Hitty hastened to put in; "just think of having two of him!"

"That would be horrible; I was thinking we should only have to have half of him at a time."

The dowagers ate and smiled good-naturedly at this foolish badinage.

"How funny Mr. West is!" a Baltimore lady remarked to Mrs. Kellogg.

"He is silly," was the uncompromising reply, "and in nine cases out of ten that answers every purpose."

"Oh, you are too severe!" exclaimed Mrs. Crawford. "Mr. Crawford says he is one of the funniest boys he ever saw."

Mrs. Kellogg tweaked her nose and sniffed scornfully, and then examined her tea with severely critical eye before she tasted it, to see whether it had shared the accident which had befallen Miss Hatherway's.

"Boys are not funny," she observed incisively, "except that it is funny that anybody can laugh at them. I'm sure I can't. Do see how that widow has given Mr. Hampton the goby, and is devoting herself to Dr. Westacott."

Mrs. Crawford wisely pretended not to hear this last observation, but appeared to give her whole mind to the somewhat difficult task of eating a crumbling tart without the aid of a fork.

"There!" Hitty exclaimed at this moment; "we've had our lunch, and no fish cooked!"

"There was n't anybody to cook it."

"Oh, I can cook it!" Gilbert said, springing up from the sand. "All you want is a string tied to that tree. I've seen the Indians do it out West."

He had been lying silent, eating little and as-

suring himself that he was completely wretched, and that Dr. Westacott he hated with the deepest hatred; but his boyish nature responded to a suggestion which recalled an old experience in camping out with Indian guides. He began searching his pockets for strings, calling for contributions from those around him; and before long one of the cod which Mr. Crawford had insisted upon buying from a fisherman they met by chance was dangling by its tail over the coals. He had slashed the fish and rubbed it with salt in a very knowing manner; and once he was at work, his sunny nature reasserted itself.

"But we've all had our lunch already," Clare Kellogg protested. "Who is going to eat that fish after it is cooked?"

"Mr. Hampton does not cook for the sake of mere vulgar eating," Olive retorted, "but for the pure æsthetics of the process."

"Eat it?" Gilbert laughed, his cheeks flushed by the fire, and all vexations forgotten for the moment, "of course you'll all eat it, if you've any appreciation of the extent to which I am suffering from the smoke in my eyes."

"I've no doubt," Dr. Westacott said goodhumoredly, "that the fish will be so delicious that we shall all quarrel for it, and there won't be half enough to go round." Manton languidly arose from his comfortable lounging-place on Kate Hatherway's shawl.

"With such an heroic example before me," he declared, "I am not able to remain idle any longer. I must cook, too. I'll make a rarebit."

A chorus of protestations arose; but after all, there was nothing else in particular to be done, and it was as entertaining to watch the boys cook as anything which offered. There was the usual chaff and confusion in the endeavor to get something to make the rarebit of and to make it in, all of which resulted in Manton's putting some cheese and butter to melt in a tin pail over the fire. He assured the company that it really did not make so much difference whether the other usual ingredients were added or not, but that mustard and ale were after all rather superstitions than essentials.

"But that mess looks like a medical preparation," Mr. Crawford observed, as Andrew began to ladle out the sticky mass upon crackers which Hitty and Kate had been busily buttering.

"Yes, something," Manton admitted with graceful candor; "but to the best of my belief it is n't, you know."

"If you'd spread it on cloth," West remarked rather brutally, "it would make an excellent porous plaster."

"Oh, how disgusting! How perfectly horrid you are!" cried Kate. "Miss Van Orden, will you have some?"

"Not after that," Phœbe replied. "Besides, I am busy watching for Mr. Hampton's fish to take fire."

She had hardly spoken before the fish did take fire. A sudden blaze enveloped it, and had not Gilbert dexterously caught it between two forks just as the string burned in two, it would have fallen into the coals. •

"That is part of the process," Dr. Westacott explained, as everybody burst into laughter; "only I suppose the Indians used forked sticks."

Gilbert flushed with unreasonable vexation, but he contented himself with silently removing the scorched skin of the cod and serving the white flesh for any one who could be persuaded to taste it. Just at that moment, however, a burning bit of string fell from the branch overhead and caught upon the skirt of Phœbe Van Orden's batiste gown. With no thought whatever of what the smouldering piece of cloth was, Gilbert set his foot upon it absentmindedly, leaving the print of a boot to which adhered a mixture of beach sand and ashes. The girl drew up her skirt a little disdainfully.

"Thank you," she said briefly.

"You're welcome," Hampton stammered awkwardly, thrown into confusion by her tone. "I beg your pardon for getting your dress muddy."

"Oh, the mud is of no consequence," Phæbe returned; and her manner plainly enough added, but the way in which you set your foot on my gown is of a good deal."

Hampton looked at her with a new interest, and although he went mechanically on with serving the fish a fresh train of thought was started in his mind. This was the first glance he had bestowed upon Phœbe Van Orden really for herself. Hitherto he had regarded her simply as Olive's daughter, and whatever admiration her beauty had awakened in his mind he had set down to the mother's account, as if he had been moved by her pictured image. Now he felt the girl's personality by experiencing a pang that eyes so lovely should have for him a regard so unfriendly, although even now he experienced an odd sensation as if it were the mother who was thus looking at him with reproof in her glance.

Nobody really wanted any fish, so that the matter of serving it was quickly dispatched, and he threw down his knife and fork with an impatient movement. He had been desperately

resolving in his mind that he would after luncheon attach himself to Mrs. Van Orden, and force Dr. Westacott to yield his place; but now when he stretched himself upon the sand it was at the feet of the daughter instead of the mother.

"I am no end sorry I stepped on your dress," he said. "It was awfully stupid of me. The truth is, I was thinking how I detested Dr. Westacott for making fun, and I didn't mind what I was doing."

"I could easily excuse your trampling on my gown," Phœbe retorted in her haughtiest manner, "but not your abuse of my friends."

She turned away to talk with Mr. Bodewin Ranger, leaving Gilbert hurt and angry. He realized the rudeness of his remark, and he was vexed with himself for making it; and yet he was none the less boyishly glad for having expressed his pique. He assured himself vehemently that he did detest Dr. Westacott; and he reflected, with pathetically foolish misery, how happy he had been before this rival came to interfere with the most delightful summer of his whole life.

The more energetic ladies of the party were packing the dishes; the party about the fire broke up; Dr. Westacott and Olive strolled a few rods away to sit down upon a log on the

beach, where Gilbert could see them talking earnestly; the girls occupied themselves in washing cups and plates in a hole dug in the sand near the water's edge, retreating with feminine screams when a tenth wave threatened to deluge their feet. Manton and West joined Mr. Crawford and one or two other men, and set off for a walk round the cove, and Phæbe was all the while entertaining Mr. Ranger so well that he seemed to have no idea whatever of moving.

Presently, however, Mrs. Wilson called to Mr. Ranger some question which caused that gentleman to rise with elaborate courtesy and go over to her. Phæbe rose also, ignoring the lad at her feet, and looking about as if deciding which way to turn.

"I wish," Gilbert said, springing up upon a sudden impulse, "that you would let me take you out in a boat."

She looked at him coolly.

"I am afraid," replied she, "that you would be too rude."

He flushed with mingled vexation and diffidence, his glance dropping.

"Just as you please," he answered, turning away.

"Oh, I'd really like to go," exclaimed Phœbe, so much startled by the suddenness of his move

that she involuntarily took a step after him. "Only you know," she added, with a mischievous flash in her eye, "that you are not to say unkind things about my friends."

He turned back, smiling grimly.

"But you can see," he remarked, as they walked toward the corner of the little bay, where the boats were, "that it is n't very pleasant to have him come and take up all your mother's attention when—"

"When you want it yourself," concluded his companion, as he paused, not knowing just how it was best to conclude his sentence. "Of course it is n't; but she has known Dr. Westacott so much longer, you see."

"Yes," he admitted jealously. "But," he added, brightening visibly, "he can't begin to admire her so much as I do."

Miss Van Orden laughed, swinging her sunshade, of the same yellowish-gray batiste adorned with disks of green silk as was her gown.

"Why, everybody admires mamma, of course. You are not nearly so original as you fancy."

"But I admire her especially," Gilbert protested.

Phœbe looked at him with a glance so penetrating that he blushed beneath it. She set her parasol over her shoulder with a decisive air, as if she did not approve of her companion's manner.

"Let's go back," she said, turning. "It is too warm to go out rowing."

And in offended silence he accompanied her back along the beach.

## X.

WHAT HE GETS, HE MUST TAKE.

Youth and Age, ii. 2.

GILBERT had never in his life felt himself so out of tune and at a loss what to do. He followed Miss Van Orden's lead without speaking, soon dropping behind on pretext of examining a pebble which he picked up, and allowing her to go on alone. When she was a dozen paces in advance he dropped upon the sand, where he lay, and flung stones into the water with savage sulkiness.

He was in a desperate rage against Olive, against her daughter, against Dr. Westacott, himself, and all the world. He revolved in his head plans for leaving Campobello at once; and he supposed himself to have firmly decided to go, when he heard a step upon the gravel behind him, and Mrs. Wilson's soft voice spoke to him.

"If you have nothing better to do than to wait upon an old woman, Gilbert," she said, "perhaps you'll give me your arm. I want to go up to the carriages."

He sprang up quickly. He was fond of Mrs. Wilson, and he had assured Olive that the fiction of kinship between himself and the old lady was more to him than any real ties of blood which his orphaned life had known.

"You know, Aunt Marcia," was his reply now, "that I could n't be doing anything I'd like better than waiting on you."

"That is a pretty speech," she returned, taking his arm with a smile; "but after all it is too much to expect that it should be quite true. However, you are always good to me."

"I should be a graceless and ungrateful cub if I were not."

They walked slowly up the short, steep path, and stood a moment while Mrs. Wilson recovered her breath.

"Thank you," she said, releasing his arm.

"At the risk of offending you, I want to give you a piece of practical advice. If you wear your heart on your sleeve, daws will peck at it. Don't do it. And here," she added with as much severity as was possible in her kindly nature, "is one of the daws."

Gilbert glanced up and saw Mrs. Kellogg approaching. Before he had time for a word of reply she stood close by them, and he was forced to let Mrs. Wilson's remark pass in silence.

"I hope you don't mind, Mr. Hampton," Mrs.

Kellogg said, "but the arrangement of the carriages has been changed. The phaeton that Mr. West and Miss Mayho came in is devoted to you and Clare for the ride home."

"I do not object to anything," he replied a little stiffly. "I am in the hands of the managers, whoever they are."

Mrs. Kellogg thanked him with quite unnecessary effusiveness, and moved off to go on with the arrangements she was making; while Mrs. Wilson turned to the lad with a look expressive of strangely mingled emotions.

"Would you suppose, Gilbert," she asked, "when you see the coolness with which that woman arranges things under my very nose, that I am supposed to have full charge of the carriages to-day?"

"Her cheek is colossal, Aunt Marcia; but you can't condescend to quarrel with her, and it really suits me personally just as well this way as any other."

He did not meet either Olive or Phœbe again before starting, as he hastened departure, and set off with Miss Kellogg as soon as the phaeton could be made ready. He was glad to escape the ride home with the Van Ordens; and although he had little fondness for Clare, anything seemed better to him in his present mood than being forced to be civil to Dr. Westacott.

He assisted his companion into the carriage and went driving away with her, silent and out of spirits, yet not without an appreciation of the wisdom of the advice Mrs. Wilson had given him, and the advisability of accepting it if he did not wish to appear ridiculous.

"Do you think," was almost the first remark of Miss Kellogg, who was not conspicuous for delicate tact, "that Dr. Westacott and Mrs. Van Orden are engaged?"

"Engaged!" exclaimed Gilbert. "What nonsense! Of course not. Who says they are?"

"Oh, everybody thinks they are."

Gilbert controlled himself with an effort.

"Of course I know nothing about it," he said stiffly. "I had n't thought about it."

"I should think it would be a very suitable match," pursued Clare, who secretly supposed herself to be playing her cards with much astuteness. "She is getting so old that she can't pick as she could once."

"She could pick if she were a hundred," her companion burst out indignantly. "She is the loveliest woman I ever saw, of any age."

The outbreak silenced Clare completely. She was a little alarmed at Gilbert's vehemence, and waited to see what he would say further. She was not so dull but she could perceive that she was not producing the effect she desired.

She played nervously with the bunch of goldenrod she carried, and for some minutes they drove in silence.

Hampton was sore and angry, quite as much perhaps with himself as with his companion. He was, however, a gentleman, and was not long in reflecting how ungracious he was to answer his companion so roughly, and now to preserve this awkward silence. He forced himself to an effort to be more agreeable.

"It has been a capital day for a picnic," he said, for the sake of saying something. "Picnics are pretty stupid things, I think; but any sort of an excuse is good enough if it only keeps one out-of-doors such weather as this."

"Yes," Clare assented. "We have had pretty good luck this summer in picnic weather. I do hope it will be pleasant for the theatricals."

"What is the money for the entertainment going for? Did they settle on that?"

"Oh, yes; it's for the church after all, though some of them thought it ought to go to the benevolent fund. Mrs. Bodewin Ranger always has her own way in the end."

"It comes to very much the same thing as long as the islanders get it," Gilbert said. "I must say I think our sonata is likely to be rather over the heads of the audience if the fishermen are all coming, as they say."

"Oh, do you think so?" Clare returned with some animation. "Don't you think it's a good thing for them to have a chance to hear really first-class music, once in a way? I'm sure I don't see how they can help liking it; it is so perfectly lovely."

Gilbert laughed with more of his natural manner than he had before shown during the drive.

"Very likely they'll regard it as a curiosity, as we should Chinese music," he answered. "At any rate, they'll be pleased and flattered that we give them the best sort. They are wonderfully patronizing about the things folks do for them. They took the theatricals last year with a beautiful air of condescension, as if they wanted to encourage struggling talent."

Clare joined his laughter and ceased teasing her golden-rod. She began to feel at her ease. She was well enough aware of the manœuvring by which her mother had secured the re-arrangement of the carriages, and she was, moreover, always secretly a little afraid of this frank boy, who responded so coldly to her efforts at coquetry, and who carried himself with such an air of mastery; and it was to her a very pleasant sensation to be chatting with him in friendly-wise.

"Do you know," she said, "I think we ought to get something ready for an encore. Could n't we practise something light, — just for the fun of coming out again if we get a chance?"

"I don't think it would be much fun; but if an enthusiastic populace insists upon calling us out we can play the Boccherini."

They branched off into musical chat, and Clare talked really well. By the time they reached Cold Spring, where by the wayside in the woods a watering-trough for the horses is placed, they were, for the time being at least, on excellent terms. The spot is a pretty rustic nook. The trees come down to the very edge of the road, and in these woods there are many fine and picturesque old birches and beeches. The place is surrounded by a brooding stillness, which seems rather to be increased than broken by the musical murmur of the water.

Gilbert guided his horse to the drinking-trough, jumped out and unchecked the animal's head, and with his hat in his hand, stood enjoying the soft air while the creature drank.

"Don't you want a drink?" he asked. "You know if you drink at Cold Spring you are sure to come back to the island."

"Oh, I've drunk it fervently a dozen times," answered Clare. "If there is any virtue in that spell I shall be one of the first arrivals next year. I don't think I care for any now, thank you."

He checked the horse's head and stepped

back into the phaeton. A brief struggle took place in his mind, and then he said,—

"We'll call on my old dairy-woman, then, and have some cream."

"Oh, that will be delightful," she exclaimed.
"I've heard so much about that cream, and I've never had a drop of it."

Gilbert had on one of his horseback jaunts discovered on the road a farmhouse at which there was a dairy of considerable importance for that part of the world; and he had been in the habit of stopping there on his rides with Mrs. Van Orden for huge glasses of cream, which the thrifty housewife was persuaded to provide at not more than three or four times the market price. He had planned to stop here on his return today, although it was certainly not for the refection of Miss Kellogg that he had expected to order cream. He made the best of the situation, however, with such grace as he might, and when he brought the goblet of luscious cream to the phaeton he offered it with an air hardly less cordial than if it had been Olive herself whom he was serving.

Clare had pulled off her hat with an affectation of girlishness which he did not find wholly pleasing, for although she was really younger than he, her manner was always mature, and any youthful airs she assumed were manifestly

artificial. He stood by the wheel with his foot on the hub waiting for her to empty the glass, and the pair presented a picture sufficiently intimate to bring a faint curl of scorn to the lip of Phœbe Van Orden, whose party drove by at this moment. She was sitting in the front of the carriage with Dr. Westacott, the latter driving, while Olive and Mr. Bodewin Ranger, who in virtue of his age was given the back seat, sat behind. Almost unconsciously Hampton frowned as he noticed this arrangement. He was annoyed that Dr. Westacott should have the companionship of this charming girl, who had so unceremoniously left him on the beach. Had he examined his feelings he would probably have believed that it was simply from dislike of his rival that the feeling arose; but as a matter of fact it was the first pang of a faint yet persistent jealousy of Phœbe, - an illogical irritation, which seemed rather to arise from the fondness he had for the likeness she bore than from any sentiment personal to herself. Affection changes by slow movement, and yet like even the gentlest tide it leaves ripple-marks upon the shore to mark its progress. Little as he was aware of it, such a trace of fluctuating passion was this faint pang of jealousy, only half-realized, which pricked Gilbert's heart as Phœbe drove by at the side of Dr. Westacott.

"Oh, how good that looks!" cried Olive as they passed.

Clare laughed and shook her head.

"It is of no use to hint," she replied.

The carriage drove on only to give place to the noisy carryall in which were bestowed Hitty and Kate with Manton and West. This vehicle stopped, and a chorus of remarks burst from all of the young people at once, although Manton seemed unwilling to expend much exertion in the rather difficult task of making himself heard.

"Oh, we've had such fun!" shouted Hitty.
"We met a small boy and offered him a dime—"

"Come, I like your cheek," broke in Burt. "Who furnished that dime? You need n't be quite so promiscuous with your we's. I provided that money."

"Yes, he did," remarked Andrew, "I am a witness. He borrowed it of me, and he has already said he would n't pay it."

"What did you offer him a dime for?" asked Clare, finishing her cream and handing the goblet to Gilbert.

"Oh, to tell us which girl was the prettiest."

"Yes," laughed Kate, "and he said he could n't tell; so Mr. West asked him which was the homelier."

"Who did he say?"

"He would n't tell that either, straight out; but he said Hitty was n't as homely as Burt."

"And that's a consolation at least," added Miss Mayho. "Though to be sure I never had supposed I could be as plain as that."

Gilbert did not find this chatter especially amusing. One must not only be young, but also in a youthful mood to be entertained with chaff. He carried the glass into the dairy, lingering unnecessarily long over his settlement with the old woman, who pushed back her gingham sunbonnet and twisted her shrivelled face into a miracle of wrinkles over the intricacies of making change. He hoped the carryall would drive on and leave him to go on alone with Clare, since, little as he was fond of her, he was by no means inclined to join in the fun and fencing of his comrades. When he came out, however, to take his place in the phaeton they were all still there.

"It was uncommon sly of you, Hampton," West called out, "to work things so as to get that comfortable little basket all to yourself, and go trundling off like a pair of turtledoves."

"I never was compared to a pair of turtle-doves before," Gilbert returned, "but perhaps I look like it."

"Oh, no," Hitty bent forward to say in his

ear, as he passed between the two carriages and close to her, "you look like a martyr."

He flung her a glance half fun and half vexation, and in a moment more they were all driving on toward the Tyn-y-coed. Hitty's saucy comment once more brought Gilbert to a sense of his childishness. He was ashamed of himself for allowing his feelings to make him inattentive or ungracious to any lady put in his care. He made a strong effort to be agreeable to Clare, and as the natural result of a virtuous deed is inward beatitude, by the time they reached home Hampton felt so much better content with himself that he began to wonder if he had not been a little severe toward Clare, and to feel that she might after all be quite agreeable if one got to know her well.

He even reflected, too, in a foolish fit of boyish shrewdness, that perhaps Miss Kellogg might serve his turn in a finely devised scheme of revenge against Olive and Phœbe, who were to be rendered jealous and miserable by his attentions to another. And such is the blindness of youth that it did not occur to him that in plotting this Machiavelian policy he inconsistently included the daughter with the mother in his scheme of revenge.

## XI.

COBWEBS AND WOMEN'S CONFIDENCES.

Youth and Age, iii. 3.

"PHŒBE," Mrs. Van Orden said that afternoon, as she and her daughter were preparing for dinner, "if you don't make friends with Gilbert Hampton, I'll disinherit you. He is a splendid boy, and Mrs. Kellogg is after him as a cat is after a mouse. She arranged that phaeton business to-day with an impudence that was simply unbelievable."

"Well, for aught I care she may catch him as a cat catches a mouse," Phœbe answered, although not ill-naturedly. "He is just as cross as a bear to me, mamma."

"But I care," Olive persisted. "He is a spoiled child, and just now he is n't himself at all. He is really one of the sweetest, most straightforward fellows I ever saw in my whole life; and I like him much too well to stand by quietly while Mrs. Kellogg devours him,—the vicious old tabby!"

Phæbe twisted her slim neck between the

mirror and a hand-glass in an attempt to obtain a satisfactory view of her back hair.

"It is too bad I was n't here in time to act," she observed, dismissing Gilbert and his fortunes as of no possible interest. "It is awfully stupid to be left out."

"It is too bad, but of course it could n't be helped. The way in which they have given Mr. Manton the part of a dandy is absurd. It is so flat a part that I could n't help asking him if he did n't hate it. 'Oh, no,' says my lord, with his most laboriously dandified air, 'it is very convenient to have only to be yourself. It saves a lot of work, you know.' He's the cleverest of the boys, after all. I said," she continued, giving a touch to her daughter's gown, "'But of course it's so foolish a part you can't be pleased.' 'I'm certainly not displeased enough to complain,' was all I got out of him."

"He is ever so much nicer than Mr. Hampton," Phœbe observed, going to seat herself by the window, while her mother completed her dressing.

"He is n't!" Olive returned indignantly. "He does n't begin to be so nice. He is more worldly-wise, but Gilbert is worth five of him. Now, I shall be seriously angry if you don't like Gilbert; I give you fair warning."

"Dear mammaina," replied Phœbe, smiling as she polished her pink nails, "you have no more talent for being severe than a kitten. I suppose you've been flirting awfully with the boy, and want me to cover your retreat."

"Phæbe!"

There was genuine indignation in Olive's tone. The daughter looked up laughing, but catching sight of her mother's face, she dropped her polisher on the window-ledge and ran to Olive. She flung her arms around her and hugged her, laughing still.

"Oh, to think I hit it so nearly! Why, I can read you like a book, mamma; you have been flirting, and —"

"Phæbe," Olive said, with a desperate attempt at dignity, somewhat spoiled by her evident struggle not to laugh, "I will not have you so disrespectful. The idea of accusing your mother of flirting! Gilbert and I have been very good friends, and I've told him I regarded him as a son."

The spirit of mischief had taken possession of the young girl. She took her mother's blushing face in both hands, and looked into her eyes with a glance keen and mirthful. Then she hugged her with more fervor than before; and after this tumultuous embrace, she stood before the window overflowing with youth and laughter,

holding up her finger in merry mockery of serious reproof.

"Oh, you wicked coquette, you scheming mamma!" she cried; "what shall I do with you? As if it was not enough to have Dr. Westacott wild about you—"

"Phæbe!" cried Olive, blushing like a girl. "For Heaven's sake, hush! Somebody might hear you."

"But to keep your hand in," went on the irrepressible Phæbe, drawing away from the fingers Olive had laid over her saucy mouth, "you take up this youth. Do you think I did n't know he was in love with you the moment I saw him? The way he glares at the Doctor is as funny as a burlesque tragedy. There, now, mammaina, don't be cross! It is n't any use."

For Olive, with an air of offended and wounded dignity, had turned away. Phoebe twined her arms about her mother, laying her head with its wealth of shining hair on Olive's bosom, glancing up into the face above with looks in which contrition and mischief were blended in irresistible drollery. She was fond of teasing, and an adept in all the wiles by which she could prolong a scene of this kind with alternate offence and placation. To-day, however, she was suddenly sobered; for she saw genuine tears in the eyes that looked down into her own.

"Why, mamma!" she cried, standing upright and putting her hands on Olive's shoulders. "What is it? What did I say?"

Olive looked into her daughter's face, her eyes wet and her lip trembling. Then she smiled bravely, and choked back a sob that had been rising in her throat. She bent over her daughter's shoulder to reach a handkerchief which lay on the dressing-table, and then, instead of taking it, she put both her arms about the girl's neck and kissed her fervently. The embrace meant many things; and whether she was conscious of it or not, her agitation was quite as much the result of her feelings toward Dr. Westacott as toward Gilbert. The emotion of a woman in love is generally pretty complex; and she may be forgiven if she herself understands but imperfectly so intricate a matter.

"It was n't you," she said, loosing her hold and drawing back from Phœbe's embrace. "It is my conscience."

She wiped her eyes, while her daughter pushed a chair close to the one in which she had been sitting by the window.

"There, mammaina!" she said. "Sit down and confess."

The unusual relations between this mother and daughter could in no way have been better shown than by the air of docility with which Olive obeyed. The pair were like two especially intimate sisters; and it not infrequently happened that Phœbe seemed like the elder, assuming toward her mother an air of protection and authority which was very droll. Olive was accustomed to say that she retained her youth because Phœbe made her feel like a child; and now that she was bidden to give an account of her conduct she apparently never thought of questioning the other's claim to implicit obedience. The confidences of the pair were always of the frankest; and as they now sat side by side, so wonderfully alike and yet so different, whatever authority was exercised seemed to come from the younger rather than from the elder. Indeed, Olive had somewhat the mien of one brought to trial and put on the defensive. She leaned back in her chair and began nervously to smooth over her slim forefinger a fold of her dress. Her eyes were downcast, and her face troubled.

"There is n't much to confess," she said, after a moment's silence. "I liked Gilbert so thoroughly, and he seemed such a boy that it never occurred to me that he was likely to lose his head. Now, would you have thought it, Phæbe?" she demanded, raising her brown eyes with so serious an air of appeal that the other burst once more into sweet laughter, and

bent forward to give her a brief but energetic squeeze.

"Oh, mammaina!" she exclaimed, "you are too delicious for anything! Go on."

"That is the way you always act when I am in a bother," Olive protested, with some show of indignation and more the air of pathetic protest. "How could I tell, I want to know? And now, if he takes up with that nasty Kellogg girl just out of pique, I shall never forgive myself. And her mother will make her go more than half way to get hold of him."

Phæbe leaned back in her chair and regarded her mother with a demure glance, although some sparkles of fun still shone in her eyes. She was wonderfully pretty; and Olive, despite her preoccupation, was by no means too absorbed to appreciate that fact. She bent forward, and with light touch adjusted the bar of opals among the lace at her daughter's throat. Then she sighed and clasped one of Phæbe's hands in both her own, the wistful, troubled look returning to her eyes.

She had much faith that her daughter would find for her a way out of her perplexities, knowing of old how much shrewdness lay under the girl's masses of glowing hair. She always brought her troubles to this adviser, declaring that the benefit of Phœbe's age was of inestimable value to her. Yet the girl, despite these playful allusions, was toward others by no means mature in manner. She possessed all the girlishness of her years, most piquantly mingled with certain airs of wisdom and gravity which appeared at unexpected moments, and which betokened the real strength of character that lay beneath an exterior which might often have seemed frivolous. With her mother's physique Phæbe had inherited her father's temperament and disposition, — which perhaps went far toward accounting for the attitude which she half-unconsciously held toward Olive.

"There, mamma," she said, "don't wrinkle up your forehead. I'll devote myself to straightening out things; though I must say Mr. Hampton has n't tried to be agreeable to me hard enough to make me over anxious to cultivate him."

"You are not fair," Olive returned eagerly.

"He has n't been himself a moment since you came, and —"

"Since Dr. Westacott came," interrupted the other, correctively.

"And he is really a delightful fellow when he is n't out of spirits," her mother went on, replying to the interruption by squeezing the hand she still held.

Phœbe laughed.

"Well, it is no matter," she returned. "Now we must go down to dinner. I'll rescue your heart-broken swain from the clutches of the other girl or perish in the attempt. The battle will be amusing, at least."

Mrs. Van Orden rose with a sigh of relief, and a smile which doubtless betokened many subtile and complex sentiments, after the fashion of the feminine smile.

"Phœbe," she observed, examining her eyes in the mirror to discover if they showed any traces of tears, "I wish I were as old and as clear-headed as you are."

"But you never will be, mammaina, never; not if you live to be five hundred years and a day old."

## XII.

THEY RIDE TOWARD THE SEA-BEACHES.

Youth and Age, iv. 2.

I was the first move in Phœbe's scheme for rescuing Gilbert from the clutches of Miss Kellogg to direct her mother to invite that young man to ride with them on the following morning. The party included Kate, Hitty, Manton and West, with the Van Ordens, Dr. Westacott, and Gilbert. They set off in the middle of the forenoon, bound for Raccoon Beach, and sped on their way by a group of the older ladies, who lingered on the piazza to see them off.

"You must sit in your saddle," somebody said, as Phœbe was mounted, "like a bird on a branch, remember that."

"Most birds that I have seen," observed Mr. Bodewin Ranger, who stood by the piazza-rail, "sit on the branch pretty well in a bunch."

"A lady at Mt. Desert," Phœbe responded, "told me it was no matter if I did n't ride straight, because the Empress of Austria sits sideways in the saddle."

She started her horse and moved away from

the steps to make room for another, and Gilbert, who without in the least knowing why had felt that upon him devolved the duty of being her especial cavalier, realized almost with a pang as he took his place by her side how very pretty she was. Her habit set off her figure, more fully developed than is usual at her age, and she sat beautifully erect, her face bright and smiling. It was like seeing the face of Olive which was so dear to him under some strange transformation which rendered it younger and fresher. He reined his horse beside hers and bent over to adjust a twist in her curb rein, — his face as unclouded as if he had not fallen asleep over night upon the desperate resolution to wake misanthropic and forlorn.

It happens at most not more than once or twice in a lifetime, and with the majority of mankind never, that a crisis occurs sufficiently weighty to change the tenor of existence. Men, and especially very young men, feel the whole earth altered only soon to discover that everything goes on as before, and that the wounds they had supposed deeply planted in their happiness are after all only surface gashes. It would have needed no seer to perceive that Gilbert's disappointment was not fatal to his happiness, yet he himself was not wholly devoid of surprise that he found himself in so good

spirits this morning. He had hitherto had no experience to teach him that it is well-nigh impossible successfully to cherish melancholy in conjunction with youth and a good digestion.

"Here, Miss Van Orden," called Burt West, coming up with a bunch of blush roses of that lovely old-fashioned sort only to be found now in a few country gardens, "it is my birthday, so I thought I'd make you a birthday present."

"Oh, thank you!" she cried. "What lovely roses! It is a shame to wear them, but they do go so well with this habit. Who has a pin?"

Gilbert cast a glance of some disfavor on West, but he was too good-natured this morning to be very sharply jealous. He gave his companion the pin for which she asked, extracting it from that corner of his waistcoat which to the masculine mind presents itself as designed by Providence as a pin-cushion, and she fastened the roses against the waist of her darkgreen habit.

"They are beauties, are n't they?" she asked; and then laughed with a sudden whimsical glee at the way in which he canted his head critically to examine the effect before answering her.

Mr. Bodemin Ranger turned and waved his hand at her in courtly fashion, while Mrs. Kellogg from her vantage ground on the piazza,

looked in her direction with an acidity which made Phœbe say rather impatiently,—

"I wish people would n't turn round when I laugh."

"People are always attracted by music," gallantly replied Gilbert, with a vague remembrance of having heard something of this kind somewhere.

"Come, that is pretty well," Phœbe returned saucily. "You are improving. It must be my influence."

"Very likely," he said, laughing.

It was a beautiful, clear day. The sky was darkly blue, with big masses of snowy clouds sailing gallantly across. A breeze mottled the water of the bay below the Tyn-y-coed with irregular dark patches. The images of the boats swam under them with wavering outline. A couple of canoes were stealing out toward the Friar, who stood up to his waist in the waves, as if being martyred by drowning. There was in the atmosphere that diffused glitter as if the sunlight were descending in powdery showers; while the wind was just fresh enough to wave every leaf and grass-blade into varying relations to the light, bringing out flashing reflections.

"I do so enjoy the air of Campobello," Olive said as the party rode out at the rustic gate of the grounds. "I seem to be the first one who ever breathed it, it is so pure and new."

Away swept the gay troop dashing down the road at a pace which forbade conversation, and for ten minutes the talk was confined to abrupt cries, broken sentences, and ejaculations, of which the literal purport was of less importance than the indication they gave of good spirits and harmonious feeling. The party took the way round by the Pool, which gave them a good stretch before they struck into the wood-road where fast riding was inadvisable.

They came at length into a rustic track, when the party fell into pairs after the fashion of such companies, and Phœbe and Gilbert drew rein to walk their horses over an ugly bit of broken road, where the horses found but insecure footing in the uneven, clayey ground. The air and the exercise had put Gilbert into the best of spirits. He was a keen horseman, and he had by no means failed to observe how well his companion rode. He found her excellent company thus far, chiefly because she looked so well and showed herself so much at home in the saddle, since there had as yet been little conversation during the ride. He was in a sunny mood, and he felt that he owed her some reparation for his ungraciousness of yesterday. The tangible grievance of his having trodden

upon her dress he had forgotten, with true masculine obtuseness, but he remembered that he had felt unfriendly and hard, and was eager for an opportunity to make amends.

"There is nothing like riding," he said, throwing back his shoulders and looking about with a clear glad glance. "I am sure you must think so, because you ride so well."

"Thank you," returned Phœbe, with a smile bright and mischievous. "I do delight in riding, although I'd rather have my own horse than this one that is so awfully hard on the bit."

"I know she is; I've ridden the jade. All these livery horses are spoiled. Your mother manages a horse beautifully."

"Oh, mamma rides better than any other lady I know. She can manage anything."

"Even her daughter?" he ventured, looking at her with mingled fun and doubt at his own temerity.

Miss Van Orden tossed her pretty head.

"As to that," she retorted, "you must ask her. I'm sure at least she'd say I was no worse than a stable horse."

"Oh, I did n't mean that, of course," Gilbert said, with eagerness. "I am afraid that after yesterday you think that I always mean to be rude, but I assure you I don't."

She laughed good-humoredly, but made no

answer in words. A sparrow alighted on a stone by the roadside and began volubly to deliver views upon the impertinence of human intrusion into so retired and quiet a neighborhood; the soft wind rustled among the trees with a small crisp murmur, and the clouds sailed serenely overhead in snowy masses. Phæbe glanced sidewise at her companion as if she were thinking of him and wished to compare the image in her mind with the original.

"Well?" he asked, intercepting the glance.

She smiled and arranged the drooping roses pinned to her dress.

"Then you do not habitually wipe your boots on ladies' gowns?" she said.

Something mocking and saucy in her mien aroused and charmed him, and he became every moment more and more at the mercy of her mood.

"No," he replied. "As a rule I allow them to burn up."

"What woman would not rather burn up than have her pet gown trampled under muddy feet?"

"Did I ruin it? I am very sorry. Is n't there any way of fixing it? Can't you loop the muddy part under somehow? Dresses are so fussed up nowadays that I'm sure nobody would notice."

She laughed gayly with a merriment he could not wholly resist, although there had been more of earnestness than of fun in his advice.

"I don't know whether to be more touched by your penitence or your profound knowledge of dressmaking. Did it never occur to you to become a man-milliner?"

"It never did. The truth is, I never cease to wonder at the cleverness of girls in being able to get into their clothes, anyway,—to say nothing of making them."

"That is because of your dense masculine intellect. I suppose no amount of training would bring your sex up to understanding such high mysteries. You'll give your energies to some frivolous trifle like law, I suppose, or medicine."

"Very likely. It is all I am fit for."

Instead of replying, Phæbe touched her horse, and they were off in the brisk trot for which a smooth stretch of road gave opportunity. Gilbert rode on at her side with the happy feeling which comes of being in accord with one's surroundings, and still more from harmony with one's companion; and although only light chat passed between them during the remainder of the ride to the beach, their friendly attitude toward each other seemed well established. Even Phæbe owned to herself that despite her first impressions, she found this big, frank boy

much to her liking; and the task of protecting him from the wiles of Clare Kellogg did not after all seem likely to prove a very disagreeable undertaking.

Raccoon Beach is a pretty stretch of pebbles, curving in between rocky points. Here after a storm one may hunt for agates and carnelians, and even occasionally find one; so that searching for them is a legitimate part of an excursion. The party dismounted and strolled down to the water, exchanging those nothings which are the bubbles in the cup of life so necessary to those who prefer the draught of existence effervescent. Burt West and Hitty Mayho were as usual squabbling, the point of difference being whether Mr. Bodewin Ranger had or had not promised to lend for the theatricals some old-fashioned silver candlesticks he had found and purchased at a farm-house on the island.

"Of course he'll lend them," Hitty declared. "Why in the world should n't he?"

"Well," Burt retorted, with his most exasperating air, "he's so hard of hearing that I could n't understand him very well, but I thought he said they were nailed up in a box of things he had got ready to send to Boston. But if you know, you know,—even if you are wrong, as you generally are."

"You are the rudest boy," declared Kate,

coming to her friend's rescue, "that it was ever my misfortune to know. Who cares about the bothersome old candlesticks, anyway? We can get on perfectly well without them."

"Oh, we could get on perfectly well without the play, for that matter," was West's reply.

"I'm glad I'm not in that play," observed Gilbert. "You do nothing but quarrel about it."

"Why were n't you?" inquired Phæbe.

He flushed a little, remembering that he had obstinately refused a share in the theatricals because he wanted all his time to enjoy the delight of Olive's society. Kate spared him the need of replying.

"Oh, Mr. Hampton is nobly superior to anything so frivolous. I don't see," she ran on, coming back to the original topic of conversation, "why Mr. Manton can't change his part a little, and say nothing about the candlesticks."

Manton laid himself languidly down on the pebbles, and stretched back with his hands under his head.

"By all means," he said, "leave out all of my part that you possibly can. I'd rather have it all omitted, if it's the same to you."

"Nonsense!" retorted Hitty briskly. "There are candlesticks enough to be had. Campobello is full of them, and you won't have a word left out."

The company one by one seated themselves upon the beach or upon pieces of drift-wood, and the talk hushed a little as they listened to the sound of the surf on the pebbles, advancing with sudden dash and drawing back with hoarse grating murmur. Gilbert made a brief search among the stones close to the water before he seated himself beside the log upon which Phœbe sat, and as he took his place he held up for her inspection a pebble still wet with brine and from which he had not even wiped the tiny bubbles of foam. It was a coarse carnelian, rudely heart-shaped in form and worn by the waves into fantastic irregularities. It was of white and purple, with flecks of red scattered through the translucent stone.

Phœbe took it in her hand, and examined it curiously.

"It is a merman's heart," she said. "He evidently had a hard time before he got through with it, poor fellow."

"No, it is mine," Gilbert replied.

His answer might have seemed an attempt to give a personal turn to the conversation, had it not been spoken in a tone at once mechanical and absent. He was watching Olive with a fixed regard, and Phœbe, noting the direction of his glance, shot at him a look askance, in which were mingled pity, irritation, and coquetry.

"Oh, in that case," she said, dropping the pebble into his hand, "I have no right to it."

He detected some flavor of sarcasm in her voice, for he turned and examined her face curiously. He looked the carnelian over carefully as if estimating its value, and then he extended it once more.

"I'll give it to you," he said. "I have no further use for it."

Phœbe affected to examine the proffered heart with closer scrutiny, though without taking it from his fingers.

"It looks worm-eaten," she observed critically. "Are you sure it is n't second-hand?"

He flushed to his temples, and with an impulsive motion flung the pebble far out over the shining water, where it flashed down into the twinkling waves and was lost.

Phæbe laughed provokingly.

"What are you laughing at?" he demanded rather brusquely.

"Oh, nothing, except at your unnecessary energy. I am glad you threw it away. It is so tiresome to have a lot of stupid souvenirs cluttering about. You don't like to throw them away, but you perfectly despise to keep them."

She looked at him so saucily, so laughingly, so teasingly, and withal she was so bewitchingly pretty, that the lad forgot to notice that Olive

and Dr. Westacott had risen and strolled away from the rest of the party. He returned Phœbe's gaze, the foolish melancholy fading from his eyes, until the regard which met hers was hardly less merry than her own.

"You are evidently determined to tease," he said smiling, "but you at least make it clear that a heart is no object to you."

"Oh, it was only that especial one I was discussing," she retorted, rising.

"You are saucy enough," Gilbert returned, springing up to join her.

"Saucy?" repeated West, overhearing the word; "she'll be as saucy as you please, but she won't bear you any malice for it."

## XIII.

THEY WEAR BUSKINS IN SPORT.

Youth and Age, iv. 3.

IFE at a summer resort is much the same one day as another. There is more or less difference in the points toward which picnic parties direct themselves, the embroidery of the ladies and the yacht-racing of the men varies a little from time to time; while doubtless here as elsewhere the history of human lives faithfully written from day to day would, despite whatever apparent monotony, be found to be really full of the most weighty alterations.

For the week following the coming of Phæbe Van Orden to Campobello there was little change in the outward appearance of the relations of the people at the Tyn-y-coed, although to Gilbert it seemed as if the whole tenor of life were utterly altered. He did not realize that the disturbances which affected him were within his own mind; that he was committing the common, one might perhaps say the universal, error of assuming his feelings to be the result of outer events rather than of inward emotions. He was stirred

by conflicting impulses which, had they possessed the depth he believed them to have would have torn him with unspeakable pain. He fancied himself consumed with jealousy over Mrs. Van Orden's evident and marked graciousness to Dr. Westacott; yet he was capable of being beguiled by Phœbe's coquettish witcheries into forgetting to be angry and miserable, even with the spectacle of his rival's success before his very eyes. He was still sure that he loved Olive passionately, yet when they started for a ride or a walk he was disappointed if it were at the side of any one save Phœbe that he found himself. Even when he rode at the bridle-rein of the mother, which indeed seldom happened now, he involuntarily cast longing looks toward the daughter, — a fact which the former by no means failed to note and appreciate. He even supposed himself to be in some sort carrying on a flirtation with Clare Kellogg, but except for the eagerness with which every attention was received by that young lady and her mother, this was the flimsiest of fallacies. It was to Miss Van Orden that he was devoting himself more and more closely every day, and Mrs. Kellogg's spiteful remark that Mrs. Van Orden had passed her lover over to her daughter, seemed after all to have a pretty fair foundation of truth.

Olive regarded the progress of the friendship

between Gilbert and her daughter with satisfaction, although in truth her own affairs with Dr. Westacott occupied her too fully for her mind to be up to its ordinary keenness. Four or five days after Phæbe came from Mt. Desert she was followed by a certain mild-mannered Baltimorean whom the Kelloggs had assiduously cultivated the summer before, but who had somehow escaped. At Bar Harbor he had met Miss Van Orden, and her coming to Campobello had determined him to hasten somewhat his own visit to that island.

"You should have seen, mammaina," Phœbe said laughingly, as they spoke of his arrival, "how sheepishly silly about me Mr. Sefton was at Bar Harbor. He is always going on about some girl, they say."

"Don't you think, my dear," Olive returned, "that it will be as well to let him flirt with you a little now? It will keep Gilbert from making too much of your friendship for him, don't you think?"

Phæbe regarded her mother with eyes full of veiled mischief.

"Oh, by all means," she returned. "I'd like nothing better than a chance to show Mr. Hampton where he really stands."

Olive turned and looked at her daughter, keenly and curiously.

"Phœbe Van Orden," she declared, "I know you are up to something; but I give you fair warning, I won't have you abuse Gilbert."

For the week preceding the amateur theatricals at the Owen there was an unusual stir in the air at the Tyn-y-coed. Everybody who was to take part went about with that petty but pretty air of importance which belongs to an affair of this kind; there were discussions about properties, costumes, and all the details, which are generally arranged in so many ways beforehand that when the critical moment comes they are found to be practically not arranged at all; and, in a word, the true enjoyment of private theatricals, which as everybody knows lies in the preparing for them, was tasted to the full by the young people.

Phœbe was after all to have a part in the performance. A young lady who was to play the role of a French waiting-maid, was called home by the sudden illness of her father, and Miss Van Orden was slipped into the vacant place at once. Phœbe had become wonderfully popular in the brief space she had been at Campobello. Partly this was due to the admiration and liking felt for Mrs. Van Orden, but the personality of the daughter was sufficiently distinct to win for her a friendship quite individual and particular. Her brightness, her unfailing good spirits, the

kindliness with which her sauciness was piquantly mingled, and in no small degree also the brilliancy of her beauty and the grace of her movements were all so attractive that it was by no means surprising that she was so general a favorite.

She bewildered Gilbert sometimes by her flashes of raillery, her whimsical caprices, her occasional brief relentings and rare moments of incongruous reserve and coldness. A young girl generally appears far more difficult to understand than a mature woman, because the latter has learned to hide many of the wayward impulses to which in youth she would have yielded openly and unreservedly. To Gilbert the character of Olive seemed ten-fold more simple and direct than that of her tantalizing daughter, merely because he saw in the elder woman only those feelings which she chose to show, while Phæbe displayed a hundred bewildering and inconsistent phases of feeling and behavior every hour. She was scarcely more constant or consistent than the opal, that mocking-bird among gems, which simulates the note of every jewel. She was so strangely like and yet so wholly unlike her mother that she had always for him the fascination of a mystery; and nothing appeals to the boyish mind more strongly than a mystery.

"How like your mother you are," he said to her one evening when she had been sitting for five minutes silent.

"Am I?" she retorted. "It is n't nice to tell me I look twice as old as I am; but since it is mamma, I take it as a compliment."

"No," he continued, the difference between her manner and that of Olive striking him with novel force; "you are not the least in the world like her."

"Thank you," she said. "Your sex is always so consistent."

"Why, I was consistent. It was you that changed."

"Nonsense," Phœbe laughed, with a flirt of her fan. "I am as constant as the Pyramids, only you don't understand me."

"Very likely that is it," Gilbert agreed with a smile; "but I'd be willing to wager we are in the same boat there, and that you don't understand yourself."

The evening appointed for the theatricals came at last; and with much laughter, much jesting, and much needless but pleasant bustle, everybody was transported from the Tyn-y-coed over to the Owen, either in the capacity of performers or spectators. In the idle life of summer an occasion of this kind is made to take on a great importance, and half the enjoyment of

these affairs is the assumption of weight which is imparted to them.

The programme for the evening was made up of music, tableaux, and a little drama, after the pleasant fashion not uncommon in such entertainments. Although Gilbert had declined to have a part in the play, he was to stand as a Puritan in a tableau,—a part for which his rather grave face, aged a little by the addition of a few lines and a Vandyke beard, proved well adapted. Olive, who by universal request was assisting behind the scenes, although she had steadfastly refused to appear on the stage, met him in the wings as he came from the dressing-room ready for the scene.

"Good evening, Master Brewster," she saluted him, while she studied him with keen and curious eyes. "Your worship is sure to be elder some of these days, and very likely to set the rest of us in the stocks for frivolity. In good sooth, worshipful sir, I am afraid of your reverence."

Gilbert laughed and stroked his false beard.

"Very likely I shall be forced to do so," he answered; "and when I am I shall not betray my conscience by making the sentence a short one; I know how well you all deserve it."

"There is no zealot like a reformed reprobate," Olive laughed, straightening his ruff. "I

hope you will not apply the same principle to friendship, and when you get over liking me fall to hating me heartily."

There were traces of excitement in her manner which could not escape him. He comprehended dimly that some especial significance underlay her words, although what it might be he was at a loss to understand. He looked at her closely; there shot through his mind a poignant doubt whether mother or daughter were more beautiful, and the conviction that never had he seen Olive so lovely as now; he tried to speak, but he could not tell what he wished to say. All his honest, emotional, boyish heart burned within him. He was in that state of excitement when the veriest trifles could move him, — when he seemed to himself to have lost hold on all old anchors, and to be cast loose at the mercy of whatever wind might blow. There is always to an unsophisticated lad a certain dreadful and confusing mystery in these first whirling love experiences. The emotions which seem to shake his very being are so new, so unintelligible, and withal so overpowering, that the youth becomes dizzy and bewildered by the rush of feeling.

Gilbert, although by nature capable of deep sentiment, had been all his life unusually exempt from its experience. His affections had lacked

proper outlet, while his passions had been unawakened. Now, in the press of conflicting and vibrant emotions, his love for Olive and the feeling which, almost unconsciously to himself, had sprung in his heart for Phœbe, he found himself confused and bewildered. He looked into Olive's glowing face, and her brown eyes - bright with unwonted fire seemed to prick him to the soul. His heart beat so quickly that he panted rather than breathed, a sudden weakness wrung his strength out of him, and the air around pressed upon him like the grasp of a giant hand. He was conscious but of the single thought that he loved Olive passionately, eternally, and with his whole being.

He was called to the stage, his whole interview with Mrs. Van Orden having been but of a moment's duration. He understood neither himself nor her, and he lingered an instant, her words coming back to him, seemingly from a distance of time, although they had just left her lips. He could divine no significance in them unless they were meant to emphasize once more the idea of their separation.

"No," he said soberly, "I don't think I could hate you, even if I were able to get over being fond of you."

He hurried on to the stage, his head in a

whirl. Olive looked after him with a mischievous glance and an almost imperceptible shrug. She realized Gilbert's mental condition hardly better than he did, although she was sure he was 'unconsciously becoming more fond of Phœbe than of herself, and that the lad's love which she had awakened in his heart would easily give place to some healthful, natural passion. She sighed in the midst of her smile, though her face was unclouded as she went on to the dressing-room. Perhaps no woman ever without some secret regret deliberately put aside the passion offered her by any man, no matter how sincere was her desire that he should not love her. Yet having sighed, Olive was shrewd enough to recognize her own inconsistency, and meeting her daughter at the dressing-room door, she bent forward with a little laugh and kissed her impulsively.

Phœbe looked at her mother keenly. Perhaps she discerned that so fervent and sudden a caress must have more behind it than the calm flow of maternal affection. She saw in Olive's eyes a light and a joyousness which to her sense conveyed with subtile certainty intelligence of a crisis.

"Mamma!" she exclaimed, in a voice low, but full of meaning.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Hush, hush!" Olive responded, blushing,

and putting her hand up with a hasty gesture of warning. "Don't speak, for pity's sake!"

Phœbe answered by throwing her arms about her mother's neck and kissing her fervently. Then she hurried away to the stage.

"For my part," observed Clare Kellogg spitefully to Kate Hatherway, "I do not like quite so much demonstrativeness between mothers and daughters."

"You have nothing to reproach yourself with," Kate responded dryly,— a thrust which made Clare's cheeks flush hotly.

Phœbe took her place hastily beside Gilbert on the stage, and in the bustle of that last moment of breathless confusion which is an essential feature of all properly conducted amateur theatricals, Hampton said to her,—

- "What is it?"
- "What is what?"
- "Why, you look as if you'd just had something remarkable and delightful happen to you."

She looked at him with eyes shining. If space had been given for reflection she would never have betrayed Olive's secret, but the bell tinkled, and in the second which intervened before the curtain began to show a gap between its edge and the stage, Phæbe sent into his ears a swift, winged whisper,—

"I am sure mamma is engaged!"

One learns quickly in the school of experience. A month earlier Gilbert could scarcely have concealed his feelings under the shock of this abrupt announcement, even with the help of the immediate necessity of retaining the semblance of composure on the stage. He set his teeth together, but a certain grimness of expression accorded well with his part. The pretty hall, with its audience strangely mixed of summer visitors and Campobello people, seemed to him like a vast, black void. All the tragic, boyish sense of finality which gives to youthful experiences a dignity and an intensity which is no less genuine because the unreality of its causes forbids its being permanent, surged and tingled within him. He did not so much feel hurt or angry as stunned. He had for days been saying to himself that Olive and Dr. Westacott were unmistakably lovers; but he had been repeating it rather as a sort of charm against the thing's actually becoming true than because he would believe it. He gazed straight before him unseeingly, with as dark a countenance as if the compact being signed in the tableau were some desperate instrument in virtue of which the "Mayflower" was to become a pirate and all on board wild desperadoes.

When the curtain at last fell, after what seemed

to him an endless time, he turned to Phœbe, but before he could speak, she said hastily:—

"Oh, Mr. Hampton, do forget what I said! I don't know what possessed me; only I met mamma just as I came on to the stage, and I thought I saw it in her eyes, and I spoke before I knew what I was saying. Please let it be as if it had not been said."

Whatever words had been on his lips, he forgot them, and for the moment was only conscious of the lovely, pleading face before him, which he so seldom saw except full of mockery and mirthfulness. Even the thought of Olive for the instant vanished, and his feeling was wholly Phœbe's as he answered:—

"Whatever you said you said to Brewster, and he's been dead for centuries, you know; so your secret is certainly safe."

He hurried to the dressing-room to change his dress and to prepare for his duet with Clare Kellogg; and there amid the crowd of actors who were making the always scanty room the less sufficient by their haste and confusion, he was noisily gay. He had very little idea what he said or did, and cherished a beautifully exaggerated notion of the intensity of his feelings, experiencing a degree of satisfaction in believing himself hopelessly heart-broken which sufficiently proved how far from being

incurable was the wound which he had received.

As he went toward the stage with his violin in his hand he again encountered Olive.

"I must see you," he said to her in a sort of tragic whisper as he passed.

Then he stood before the audience and played with all the intensity of his youthful and vigorous nature, alive and keenly sensitive, putting into the music the passion and longing which, uncomprehended by himself, swelled in his hot young heart.

And while he was playing, like a seed blown abroad by some wild wind from the pit, there came into his mind the idea that he would marry Clare Kellogg, whose music answered to his, blending and swelling, yearning upward like a sympathetic echo, and seeming the only earthly thing which could reach him in that elevated sphere of emotion to which his violin had lifted him.

## XIV.

THIS IS A BOY'S MADNESS.

Youth and Age, iii. 3.

THE duet of Gilbert and Miss Kellogg was the last number of the programme before the play, and during the intermission which followed it, Olive was surrounded by so many people asking for aid or advice that Gilbert was unable to obtain a word with her. When the curtain was rung up on the comedietta, however, he found her alone.

"Come!" he said imperatively. "I must talk with you."

"Not now," she answered. "Do you think I have time to talk? I have too much on my hands. You will have to wait until to-morrow."

"I cannot wait," he returned more hotly still;
"I will not wait!"

She regarded him with some surprise, and then cast her eyes about as if seeking the means of escape. His manner was so excited that she feared that unless she yielded he would make a scene where they were, and anything which took place here was sure of witnesses. She turned

to him with a sigh of mingled sorrow and exasperation.

"Very well," she said calmly, "if you will be so unreasonable; come out of doors."

She threw over her shoulders a wrap which lay upon a pile of stage trappings, and led the way. He followed with a face full of anger and excitement. They were obliged to pass through a room sombrely fitted with the antique furniture from the old Owen mansion, but she did not pause here, keeping on into the open air and along the piazza past the windows of the hall where the performance was given. Fortunately they encountered nobody who knew them well enough to be especially interested in their movements, and in a moment they were safely away from curious ears.

The Owen is a hotel remodelled from the mansion of old Admiral Owen, to whom Campobello once belonged. A covered way, open at the sides, connects with the main structure the building in which is the big diningroom used as a hall. Olive passed rapidly along this, and the young man followed with long strides. The cool night air, doubly refreshing and grateful after the heated atmosphere they had just left, fanned their faces. The scent of the old-fashioned flowers in the garden floated about them. They heard the

rustle of the sea on the shore, and the innumerable sounds which seem rather to emphasize than to interrupt the silence of the summer night,—the chirping of the crickets, and the numberless insect voices, soft and soothing; the murmur of the leaves and those faint lispings as if the shadows were talking together. The calm of the time, contrasted sharply with the stir and bustle of human presences behind them, affected them as a tangible and powerful influence.

Olive hurried on, wishing to be far enough from the hall to be sure of freedom from interruption, while Gilbert, with his melodramatic stride, kept just behind her; and thus they went forward until they reached the wide piazza of the hotel itself. The Owen had not been opened that summer, and they were alone and safe from the chance of being overheard, especially as Olive led the way to the side nearest the water, and farthest from the hall they had left.

It was a glorious, moonless night. The stars shone with almost a wintry brilliancy, although the summer sky was soft and humid. Olive stood by the piazza-rail where she could look out over the bay, seeing the ship-lights on the water, the gleaming windows of the towns on shore, and the shining light-house beacon. In her ears was the hum of the music which now

and then sounded from the hall, and the ripple of the coming tide on the rocks below.

She turned and faced her companion.

"Well?" she asked, "what is it?"

He came close to her, and clasped the railing with both hands.

"Why," he demanded abruptly, "did you not tell me long ago that you were engaged?"

"I was not," she replied laconically.

She became calm from seeing how excited he was. She was too fond of him not to be moved by pity and by some remorse; she was too human not to be exasperated. Her mind was keenly alive to the situation, and on the alert to seize any chance or inspiration which would aid her to avoid a quarrel or to extricate herself and him from so painful a situation. She reflected, however, that it was of little use to attempt to check him, and she let him continue as he would.

"That is only an evasion," he retorted, with an accent of mature scorn and masculine mastery which made her thrill with a sudden sense of the change his passion had wrought in the lad.

"It is the truth," she said, feeling as if by some strange transformation the boy she had known had suddenly become a man.

"But you knew you would be when Dr. Westacott came."

"Why, as things are now," Olive answered, with a laugh full of nervousness, "I do not mind confessing to you that I hoped so; but you can see for yourself that that hardly justified me in—"

"Oh," he broke in with fierce impetuosity, "what is the use of quibbling in that way! You amused yourself with me so long as you had nothing better to do, and then you threw me aside. It was cruel, and you know it."

He was working himself into a passion rare with him. He was dimly conscious that his mounting feeling was half artificial, and this made him the more eager to experience all the transports of indignation and passion which he affected. He intentionally fanned the fire of his own anger. He was possessed at once by a desire to humiliate this woman who had won his boyish love only to reject it, and by a fear lest his heart would fail him without the stimulus of a fury which he strove to feel. Every moment he became more fully persuaded that his love and his pain were genuine, while yet he was secretly aware of the need of feigning. He did not in the least examine his feelings, but he could not wholly avoid the consciousness that to a degree he was acting a part as theatrical as any being played in the hall from which they had come.

Olive was far more deeply and genuinely moved than he, although outwardly she was the calmer of the two. She was in the softened mood of a woman who has just accepted the man she loves, and now as before in her interviews with Gilbert some self-reproach made her inclined to be forbearing and tender. She came a step nearer and laid her hand on his shoulder.

"Come, Gilbert," she pleaded in a voice full of entreaty, "don't be unkind and unjust. You know what you say is untrue, and that I have never meant to do you harm. Has my friendship been so burdensome that you must claim a reward for having endured it? Have I ever been any different to you from what I am now? You know how fond I am of you, and when have I ever been insincere or pretended to be in love? I should have told you of my engagement as soon as anybody but Phœbe. I have n't even spoken to her yet. I cannot tell how you found it out; but I meant to write you a note to-night if I did not have a chance to see you alone. Come, you have been like a splendid brother to me all summer; why must you spoil it now?"

He felt his anger and his defiance fading away, and he took refuge in sullenness. He shook off her touch and turned his face to seaward.

"You forget that I love you," he said.

The words cost him an effort, and even in saying them he felt them to be false; yet he pronounced them with a dignity that for the moment almost deceived Olive. He was enraged with himself that he could not feel them, that he could not even in the dim starlight bear to meet her glance; while, most of all, did a blind, unreasonable anger fill him at the conviction that the love which a fortnight earlier he had been sure must be eternal had already in some mysterious manner slipped away from him.

His averted face and the remembrance of his attitude toward Phœbe kept Olive to her old conviction concerning the unreality of the passion he professed for herself. She threw backward from her throat with an impatient movement the wrap she wore. She sighed as might one who is dealing with a refractory and unreasonable child.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "why can you not be honest? Why will you keep saying that over and over, and trying to persuade yourself of what you know — what you must know — is n't true? You no more want to marry me than you want to marry your grandmother. Don't you suppose a woman can tell? You are too stubborn to own to yourself, perhaps, that you have got over that folly, — that if you ever were in love with me it was a matter of a day, like any other boyish whim. Why do you want to make me

miserable just when I was happiest? Do you suppose I have n't been lonely all these years? Is it kind in you, is it generous?"

She spoke with fervor, which increased as she went on. The justness of her reproach and the accuracy with which she read his heart alike stung him. All the stubbornness of his nature was aroused, while yet he fought against himself lest gentler feelings obtain the mastery.

"Well," he said bitterly, "I will wish you joy, then. Let me be the first to congratulate you. What I may or may not happen to feel is evidently of no consequence. If I break my heart—"

"Stuff!" Olive interrupted impatiently. "Don't talk nonsense! I beg your pardon; but to think that you of all people, Gilbert, should be guilty of such silly sentimentality! Come, let us forget all this foolish talk and start fair again."

She held out her hand as she spoke, but he would not see it. He turned still farther away from her.

"I do not think," he replied with a stiffness at which Olive, despite her earnestness, could not help smiling, "that it is worth while. You will not like my wife."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Your wife?"

<sup>&</sup>quot;Yes; I mean to marry Miss Kellogg."

For a moment Mrs. Van Orden stood in amazed silence; then she broke into irrepressible laughter.

"I beg your pardon," she said, "but—"

"It is no matter," he returned with awful dignity. "I have never been anything but a laughing-stock to you."

Olive gathered her wrap about her shoulders.

"Gilbert Hampton," she said, "you are making an awful dunce of yourself, and you are angry with me because I won't pretend not to know it. When you are ready to be sensible I will talk with you. Your wife! You are no more likely to marry Clare Kellogg than I am; and you've no right to bring her name up in that way. You know you like me a hundred times better because I've never allowed you to be silly. I have begged you to behave quite as long as I have patience to. When you see that a woman's friendship is as good as a boy's love, and a great deal more lasting, I shall be glad to let all this folly go, and to come back to the old footing. Only, don't in the meantime get involved in any foolishness that you can't untangle."

She walked away and left him standing there. Her cheeks were flushed, and there was a smile on her lips as she returned to the hall; but from her eyes she had to wipe genuine tears before she could again present herself amid the confusion of the side-scenes.

She met Manton just coming from the stage, followed by Kate Hatherway.

"Do look!" cried the latter. "See Mr. Manton. He went on with his trousers turned up, and spoiled all the elegance of his attire."

Manton met Olive's amused glance with so cool and significant a smile that a sudden light flashed upon her.

"You are astute," she said. "You have done what you wanted to, and I am the only person who will understand."

He smiled again, glancing after Kate, who had hurried on to the dressing-room.

"I certainly did what I wanted to," he answered.

Olive regarded him with a growing light in her eyes. She leaned a little toward him.

"You are generous enough not to misunderstand," she said hurriedly, "and clever enough to contrive how to help me. Do keep Mr. Hampton from making a mistake about —"

She hesitated; and at that moment Miss Kellogg appeared, coming toward the spot where they were standing.

"About—?" repeated Manton.

Olive answered him by the slightest significant glance toward Clare

## XV.

Women will say Much in the Dark.

Youth and Age, v. 2.

LIVE and Phœbe occupied the same chamber, but on this particular evening they did not seek it together. The daughter lingered to chat with the girls before the hall fire, it being necessary that all the events of the theatricals be passed in review; and when at length, well toward the small hours, she reached her room, Mrs. Van Orden was apparently asleep, her face turned toward the wall.

Phœbe made the room very light, hummed a tune, wilfully dropped a hair-brush, splashed the water, and resorted to all the indirect methods of attracting notice which occurred to her, but she could not induce her mother to speak. She therefore completed her preparations for the night in a deliberate fashion, turned out the gas and slipped into bed in silence.

She arranged her pillow with a good deal of bustle, and then for half a moment she lay quiet, as if she had abandoned the effort to provoke a conversation. It was not her wont, however, to yield a point so easily, and after a little she observed dispassionately:—

"I know you are awake, mamma; I heard your eyelashes rustle on the pillow."

Olive turned herself with a sudden movement, facing her daughter in the darkness.

"Phœbe," she said, "I'm sure I don't know whether to shake you or myself."

"It would be easier, mammaina, to shake yourself; but you can do as you please. What has that contrary boy been doing now?"

"Rufus? Nothing. He always behaves. That's why I like him. You can count on him."

"If I ever turn out to be a monster of guile," observed Phœbe, addressing her remark to the unprejudiced shadows who might be supposed to inhabit unseen the darkness about them, "it will simply be the irresistible effect of heredity."

Olive laughed, putting one smooth, warm arm over, that she might possess herself of her daughter's hand. Having got hold of it, she squeezed and patted the plump, smooth ball a moment, varying this affectionate treatment with little pinches and teasings eminently feline.

"Phœbe," she said in a soft voice which seemed overcharged with hidden emotion, "I shall hate you if you will persist in being so clever. He says he is going to marry Clare Kellogg."

Phœbe laughed lightly. "Is that all? I hope you remembered to congratulate him."

Olive laughed nervously, with no color of glee in her tones. She pinched Phœbe's hand so that the latter cried out, and then suddenly she broke into unreasonable crying, twining her arms about her daughter and clinging to her with a fervent embrace.

"I don't know whether I ought to laugh or to cry over it. He is a great, splendid simpleton of a boy, and he is too absurd for any mortal use; and then all the time I was so fond of Rufus that I never thought how it was going on, and now I can't tell whether he is really in earnest or only a goose, and it makes me wretched."

Her daughter replied chiefly by hugs, pats, smoothings, and other feminine endearments, and in a moment Olive was once more calm. She was even able to laugh at her own foolishness, and to jest at the tendency to hysterics with which Phœbe reproached her.

"I have one ally," she said. "Do you know what a clever thing Andrew Manton did tonight? Everybody said he'd only to act himself in that part, and he turned up the bottoms of his trousers just before he went on to the stage."

" Well?"

"Why, don't you see, everybody thought it was an accident; and of course if it was they could n't think he'd given his whole mind to his clothes. It was one of the cleverest things, for a little ruse, I ever saw."

"Yes," Phœbe assented, "it was clever; but after all, how he must have thought about it to hit on anything so shrewd!"

"Nonsense! Anyway, I asked him to look after Gilbert."

"Because he is so clever?" Phœbe asked, laughing.

"Yes," Olive replied, with an accent of pique, "because he is so clever."

"Oh, mamma!" Phœbe cried, going off into peals of girlish laughter which seemed rather disproportionate to their cause, and in which excitement from the experiences of the evening had probably as great a share as amusement, "oh, mamma, mamma, you are too funny for anything! What do you expect Mr. Manton to do? — take a hand at flirting with Miss Kellogg?"

"I don't know what he will do, but he is sure to think of something clever. You may laugh, but he and I can manage without you."

"Oh, you are welcome to; I'm sure it is all one to me."

Olive doubled her pillow under her head and then raised herself on her elbow.

"How in the world," she began, "did he know—"

"Did he know what?" demanded Phœbe as she paused.

Olive dropped her head and turned her face toward the wall again.

"Good-night," she said.

Phæbe laughed once more, and abandoned her hand to her mother, who cuddled it under her chin in a fashion kittenish and loving. There was a silence of some moments, during which each of the women thought of the topic which was uppermost in the minds of both, although it had not yet been mentioned. Nothing is more significant or more touching than the reserves of those who are most intimate, and who seemingly open their entire souls to each other. There are always topics which are instinctively avoided, secrets which are half-unconsciously hidden, inner sanctuaries of the mind into which even the familiar friend is never invited to set foot. Between Olive and her daughter there existed a rare and large frankness, yet the mother was avoiding and dreading the simple telling of a fact of which she knew her daughter already to be fully aware.

"Come, mammaina," Phæbe said at length,

"we must go to sleep, and we can't till you say you are engaged; so why don't you out with it?"

Her mother turned to throw her arms about the daughter with convulsive embrace.

"Oh, how dreadful you are!" she cried. "How did you know? Have you told anybody? Did you see Rufus after I came upstairs? Do you think people will talk? Oh, do you suppose his sisters will like it? Oh, Phæbe Van Orden, I've half a mind to squeeze you to death!"

Phœbe returned the embrace with fervor, and the two hugged and kissed each other in the darkness in that silly but touching fashion which is perhaps more common between school-girls than between mother and daughter. They laughed and cried as women do in a situation to which their delicate sensibilities perceive the appropriateness of both tears and laughter; and then with a return to at least outward calm they kissed again with soberness and a certain formality, as if this were the ceremonious seal of congratulation.

"How silly I am," Olive said at length. "I am so nervous and excited that I feel like a hysterical lady-bug. But how, how in the world did you know?"

"I saw it in your eyes, mammaina. Of course

I knew it was coming; and there was a masterful swing of Dr. Westacott's head when he put you into the phaeton to drive you over that made me think the time had arrived. He had the air of a man who has made up his mind to do something desperate."

"You are so appallingly wise, Phœbe! As if you could tell anything of the sort. I wish," she added, her thoughts taking a sudden turn backward, "that you would bring some of your cleverness to bear on the other thing. I'm sure it bothers me enough."

"Oh, that will come out all right," was Phœbe's reply. "These boys always make a great show of desperation and all the rest of it, but it all ends in talk."

"Indeed! Since when were you so wise, Miss? You have grown wonderfully knowing in two months at Mt. Desert."

"Two months of Mt. Desert," Phœbe answered sententiously, "are for sophistication equal to years anywhere else."

"It's a fine place to send young girls, then."

"Nonsense! Girls are born sophisticated nowadays. You belong to the antediluvian race, you know."

A caress redeemed the words from any flavor of rudeness that might otherwise have seemed to cling to them.

"Are you sure that you are not the mother, and I the daughter?" Olive asked, repeating her old trick of cuddling her companion's hand beneath her chin. "Since you came I have felt so young that I have been tempted to put on pinafores. I think Gilbert might fall in love with you if you were n't so old."

"Thank you; it would do no good if he did," Phœbe said with decision.

Olive smiled wisely to herself in the darkness. Something of the daughter's shrewdness was clearly inherited from the mother, since the latter was clever enough to reflect at this moment that this new vehemence of denial could mean nothing else than an interest beyond that in an ordinary acquaintance. She had by no means intended encouraging any serious relations between Phœbe and Gilbert. She persistently regarded him as a boy whose passing fancies were to be watched and directed to the end that they did him no injury; while on the other hand she had always been anxious that her daughter should not repeat what she knew to be her own mistake of marrying too early. She was glad to have the lad interested and, in what she regarded as his transient, boyish way, in love with Phœbe, just as one likes to confine the pranks of any youthful friend to a kindly circle where of his follies will be taken

no undue advantage. She regarded Phœbe, of whose worldly wisdom she had a half-amused and half-amazed appreciation, as being safe from any misunderstanding of the circumstances of the case; and her general feeling was that of thankfulness that Gilbert in his susceptible mood should have fallen into the hands of those who would entertain and engross him without misunderstanding or allowing him to commit himself permanently.

This train of reasoning was eminently benevolent, and it was by no means conspicuously illogical. Its weakness lay in the fact that Olive overlooked the consideration that, on the one hand, her daughter inherited the temperament and the precocious maturity which had made the mother a bride at seventeen, and that on the other hand Gilbert, having lived a life of repression and loneliness, was not merely passing through the ordinary phase of hobbledehoy love-making, but was instinctively seeking an outlet for the unexpended tenderness of a nature of great emotional powers. A woman, to be wholly wise in questions of the affections, must herself be cold; and it is not to be wondered at that Olive, palpitating with the stirrings of a strong, fresh passion, failed somewhat in comprehending all the subtile details of the situation.

"Phœbe," she said irrelevantly, after five minutes of silence, "you must wear your pink crape for the hop."

"Yes, mammaina," Phœbe answered, fully aware of the fact that the probable effect of the pink gown on young Hampton was the idea which connected the remark to the previous conversation, "I intend to. Good-night."

"She had thought of it," was the reflection which shot through Olive's mind, and seemed by a side-gleam to suggest possibilities before unsuspected.

But the idea took no lodgment, and she straightway forgot the remark.

## XVI.

WHO HAS NOT PLAYED THE FOOL?

Youth and Age, ii. 3.

Olive had left him on the piazza of the Owen was a foolish and boyish sense of pleasure at having actual share in an interview smacking so strongly of the dramatic. Had he been old enough to make the deduction he might have learned from the delight the incident gave him merely as a histrionic scene that no deep feelings were concerned in it. He folded his arms and stood in the darkness in an absurdly theatrical attitude, reflecting how unutterably wretched he was, and deriving not a little secret satisfaction, which he would have refused to acknowledge even to himself, from the conviction that he was inconsolable and that his heart was broken for love.

There is something so absurd in this youthful phantom of despair, which is to the passionate stress of a real grief as the light flare from burning straw to the torch of a volcano, that it is difficult to keep in mind also its pathetic side. And yet who of us that remembers how real for the moment were these false fires to our own youth, before the touch of real sorrow had made us forlornly wise, can fail of feeling some tenderness for the age when self-deception is still possible. The pathos of playing with misery can be apparent only to those who know how awful is the throb of genuine pain; and they see in such a situation a penetrating sadness, where youth and gayety can perceive only drollery.

Gilbert was too sincere and simple-hearted to remain long posturing in the dark; and perhaps, too, the absence of an audience somewhat diminished the complete satisfactoriness of his theatrical performance. He was not too absolutely wretched to remember to keep some track of time, so that he was on hand to help Phœbe into the barge which took the young people back to the Tyn-y-coed, and to tuck the robes about her with careful solicitude. It was not until he got to his room and in unrolling his music saw the name of Clare Kellogg on a sheet which chanced to be accidentally included, that % he remembered that he had decided to marry his companion in the duet that evening. He experienced a faint feeling of annoyance, as if he had given some bond which it was irksome to keep. Instantly the reflection followed — or, more strictly, so intangible was the thought, the

impression — that his attitude as a crushed and blighted being absolutely demanded this sacrifice of his feelings. His face unconsciously took on an expression of firmness and desperate resignation, and he went about the chamber in his preparations for the night with the air of a selfdevoted martyr. The sight of his countenance in the mirror made him involuntarily assume an expression still more doleful than before; but instantly the absurdity of the situation struck him, and he broke into a laugh. Despite which fact his last conscious thought before falling asleep was a reassertion of his determination to live up to his rôle of a heart-broken and desperate lover by asking Clare Kellogg to marry him.

The next morning, however, when the young people set out to walk over to the hall of the Owen to assist in the clearing-up, which is the dreary aftermath of a theatrical performance, it was beside Phœbe that Gilbert involuntarily took his place. There was the usual badinage, in which the nonsense of Burt West was conspicuous, as he good-humoredly wrangled with Kate Hatherway and Hitty Mayho.

"Oh, as to having folks look like you," West declared, "Tom Jones looks so much like me that when he looks in the glass he always says, 'How are you, Burt?' And we are always

reading each other's letters and never finding it out."

"That must be interesting," Kate rejoined.
"Probably it was Mr. Jones I danced with when I congratulated you on getting through that quadrille straight the other night."

"Thank you," returned Burt, "I perceive you are attempting to make fun of me; but seriously, I had to go to him and tell him that if he insisted on being taken for me all the time, he must mind his eyes and stop cutting people I know."

Andrew Manton stooped to pick up a feather which one of the abundant geese of the island had dropped in the road, and thus he fell a little behind his companions. When he came up with them the next moment, he contrived unobtrusively to slip between Phœbe and Gilbert.

"See," he said extending to her the feather, "what a very odd black speck there is on the end of this feather. It is like a Hebrew character."

He spoke with absolute seriousness, and it was not until she lifted her eyes from seeing that the tiny plume was spotless, and encountered his glance, that the girl understood the ruse.

"It is Hebrew, I think," she returned, letting the feather blow from her fingers to go drifting down the road behind her. "At least, it is no language that I understand."

Manton smiled, but returned no answer in words. He was indolently amused by the rôle he was playing, and he was far too shrewd to either overact or to spoil it by any show of interest.

"Did you see that big fellow that sat at the end of the front row and applauded so tremendously?" asked Kate. "When he brought his big hands together the foot-lights all flared."

"Yes, I saw him," returned Hitty. "He chewed a wooden tooth-pick all the evening, and gave the girl next to him lozenges."

"One must draw the line somewhere of the people he'll know," commented Manton in his leisurely way; "and I think that without being caddish one can safely put it at the men who chew wooden toothpicks."

"Humph!" Burt retorted; "you'd cut off the biggest part of the great American public."

"That would n't trouble Manton," Gilbert said, rather savagely.

He wished to say something disagreeable. He resented the easy way in which Andrew had come between himself and Phœbe, and it irritated him still further that his attack provoked only a smile from the interloper. He was walking on the outer edge of the road, the line

of his companions extending across the entire street, and he fell back a moment later to stalk sulkily on alone.

Phœbe cast him a mischievous glance over her shoulder.

- "If you are to be the rear guard," she said, "you must be sure and keep the geese off."
- "The geese are in front of me," he answered stiffly.
- "Well, I call that polite," Hitty cried. "What is the matter with you this morning?"
- "Oh, let him alone," Burt West returned. "He's been in the dumps for a week. It's probably a case of misplaced attachment."

The hot blood rushed into Gilbert's cheeks, and for an instant the absolute silence of the party told plainly enough that everybody saw the point of the remark, which, to do West justice, was a mere idle and meaningless quip in intention. Hampton felt that he was making himself appear ridiculous, and he remembered Mrs. Wilson's advice not to wear his heart on his sleeve. He found the rôle of a blighted being less attractive in the morning sunlight than it had seemed on the night previous. He shook himself angrily, and turned his eyes away from his companions to the bay where fishing-boats and coasters were sailing heavily with sagging canvas. He reminded himself that he

should have remained behind to give his attentions to Clare Kellogg, and he allowed the others to get further away from him until he was half a rod in the rear. He was almost ready to turn back when the sound of wheels made him look behind, and there, driving toward him, were Olive and Dr. Westacott comfortably ensconced in a phaeton. The sight aroused all his former irritation. He could not avoid them, but he did not look up as he lifted his hat, and he returned no answer to Olive's gay salutation. He heard the voices of his friends as they called out to the pair, and a dull anger filled his heart at the happiness of his rival. He felt a new sense of loneliness and isolation. He was out of tune with himself and with all the world, and he walked forward with his eyes fixed on the ground, not noticing that the others had seated themselves, at Manton's suggestion, on a log by the wayside to wait for him. Before he saw them he was close to the spot, and as he raised his eyes, West called out, -

"We were thinking of sending a wheelbarrow back after you."

Hampton paused before the gay group, unsmiling, and feeling foolish and awkward. It was Phœbe who came to his rescue.

"Come," she said, springing up and taking her place beside him. "We shall never get to the Owen at this rate. Mr. Hampton, I'll try a match with you to the postoffice."

The post-office was a quarter of a mile ahead, and before the others were on their feet Phœbe and Gilbert were well in advance, striding forward at a great pace.

"I bet on Miss Van Orden!" Burt West shouted after them. "A cigar to a pound of candy on Miss Van Orden!"

Phœbe laughed with all the glee she could muster.

"Now I am put on my mettle," she said.

And for the first time that morning, and with very little reference to what she said, her companion broke through his gloom to laugh with genuine good-humor.

## XVII.

HE IS IN LOVE OR MAD.

Youth and Age, i. 3.

VERY likely Gilbert might have out-walked his companion had he chosen, but he kept just abreast, and the two hurried on at a pace which brought the color into Phœbe's cheeks, and curled the tiny ringlets of auburn hair about her white temples. By the time the postoffice was reached she was breathing hard, but had still the spirit to break suddenly into a run of a yard or two, which landed her on the steps of the shabby little building before Hampton realized what she was doing.

"There!" she cried, turning with shining eyes and laughing mouth, "I have beaten!"

"Oh, that was n't fair! You ran."

"Of course I did; it was a 'go-as-you-please.' Mr. West explained all about that this morning, and I distinctly meant a 'go-as-you-please' when I challenged you."

"You might have made some allusion to that fact," Gilbert returned good-humoredly, seating himself on the step. "Shall I go in and buy

you some pink corn-balls? I am sure they must be good, because they were in the window last year."

"Thank you, no. Nothing short of the best French chocolates will be accepted."

She stood half behind him on the step, and he looked up at her over his shoulder with a delight in her companionship and in her beauty which no trace of his ill-nature remained to mar.

"How much like your mother you look," he said.

"Oh, I'm not half so pretty as mamma," Phæbe replied. "I never allow people to be as fond of me," she went on, "as of mamma, because it would show such poor taste."

"Are you fishing for compliments?"

"From you, Mr. Hampton? Most certainly not. I know you better."

He laughed, and took off his hat with a mock flourish.

"Thank you," he said. "Your frankness is so refreshing it ought to cool you after your walk."

"Dr. Westacott is pleased to call it my impudence," she observed, re-tying a ribbon at her white throat. "Perhaps you would like to use the word too."

A cloud came over his face, and he turned away from her.

"Thank you, no," he answered, a little coldly. "I have not Dr. Westacott's right to be impertinent."

A spark of mischief and of malice shone in the girl's eye. She arranged a bunch of phlox in her belt with the utmost care.

"It is a pity, then," was her reply, "that you have more than his inclination in that line."

He flushed hotly. He was seldom so free to talk as with Miss Van Orden; and even with Olive he had never so easily and frankly chatted as with Phœbe. He had all the shyness of a reticent, unformed boy, and despite the self-forgetfulness and freedom with which his companion inspired him, he was acutely sensitive to her reproof. He felt suddenly uncomfortable and out of key, and the sensation irritated him deeply.

"Oh," he said rudely, "very likely he is too clever to say what he thinks. That sort of man usually is."

The spark in Phœbe's eyes changed from mischief to anger.

"What sort of man?" she demanded, in a tone which cut Gilbert like a lash.

"The sort of a man who goes about to get his ends by shrewdness," he returned.

She stepped down to the ground and stood confronting him; but he would not lift his eyes.

"Mr. Hampton," she said, with a contempt that was half real and half instinctive acting, "I supposed you were a gentleman."

She turned instantly to meet the rest of the party, who now came up, and with a perfect assumption of mirthfulness called out,—

"I won! I claim the stakes."

"I knew you'd win," Burt West responded.
"I can always tell. I knew you'd have some trick to help yourself out with if you found you were getting the worst of it."

A chorus of indignant rejoinders arose from the girls, in the midst of which Manton seated himself with his usual collected and languid air beside Gilbert.

"You have my sympathy," he observed dispassionately. "You should have known better than to try to get ahead of a woman. You have n't the nerve to be brutal enough to do such a thing any way."

Gilbert looked round at him with a quick, suspicious glance, but the other was apparently wholly unconscious and guiltless of any covert meaning.

"I appreciate your feeling," Hampton said, not very good-naturedly. "I'll do as much for you when I have the chance."

"Oh, my dear fellow," Manton replied, "don't for an instant suppose I shall ever

endeavor to outdo Miss Van Orden. I am content to be allowed to follow her lead, and proud if she consents to that."

"Oh, my!" shouted West. "Now, Andy, you are coming it rather strong, even for you. Miss Van Orden, when we come to a mudpuddle will you let me lie down in it for you to step on?"

"Thank you —" she began, but Hitty interrupted saucily, —

"The softness would n't be very much diminished."

Gilbert rose with angry impatience. This talk grated on his nerves, and he longed to get away from it. He was in the state of mind when a man feels with a sort of inarticulate rage that his ingenuity is insufficient to devise punishment sufficiently severe to be equal to his own deserts, yet when, perhaps because he judges himself so harshly, he is least tolerant of any suspicion of reproof from others. He somehow felt, with unreasonable suspiciousness, that Manton was secretly aware of his situation and was laughing at him. He experienced a confused wonder how he could have been so stupid as a second time to be guilty of attacking Dr. Westacott to Phœbe. Some malicious power outside himself seemed to possess him, and to force him to do and say things of which

the folly was as apparent to him as it could be to any one. He hardly repressed a groan as he started up; and that dreadful sense of hopelessness and of fatality with which his passion was making him so well acquainted encompassed him like a cloud. There seemed nothing left upon which he could stay himself, and the fierce pain of boyish despair, absolute but happily short-lived, stung him to the very heart.

The distance to the Owen was now trifling, and Gilbert reflected that when once the party was there he could easily slip away from the others.

"Come," he said, "we shall not get to the hall until dinner-time at this rate."

Manton rose with deliberation, and to Gilbert's intense annoyance placed himself again at Phœbe's side. The lad was beginning to regard Manton with an angry jealousy which was hardly less than that he felt for Dr. Westacott. Indeed, it may be questioned if for the moment he did not feel more enmity for his rival in the good graces of the daughter than toward the man who had come between him and the mother. The situation, could he have appreciated the fact, was to the last degree absurd, Hampton standing in the ludicrous position of assuming to the whole Van Orden family claims prior to those of any other man whatever. He

would have denied even to himself that he was in love with Phœbe, and he had even come to the point where he was not able to convince himself that his passion for Olive remained unimpaired; yet none the less he resented the interference of any other admirer in either case. There was a strange mingling of boyish unreasonableness with the man's instinct of dominion and resentment of rivalry in his feelings. He had at once the petulance of a child from whom has been taken a cherished toy, and the desperate fury of a man who sees the danger of the frustration of his love. He understood Olive very little, himself still less, and Phœbe least of all; and the baffled sense of his inability to comprehend clearly the true state of affairs, increased tenfold his sense of vexation. He stalked along in sullen silence, while the others rattled on in shallow, joyous badinage, until the Owen was reached.

Being a trifle in advance he held the gate open for the others to pass. Phœbe came last of all; and as she went by him, she raised her eyes in a glance half-defiant and half-reproachful.

"I do not care," Hampton muttered in reply to the look. "I detest him!"

She made him no answer, but went on. He lingered behind, looking over the garden with

its quaint borders, its sundial on an antique red pillar, its trellises laden with vines, and its tall trees. Then he strode up the path toward the house itself; and there on the piazza, where she had left him the night before, he saw Olive standing alone.

For a moment he hesitated, and half turned back. Then he went on and joined her.

## XVIII.

'T is some faint Glimmer of Reason.

Youth and Age, v. 2.

I T was with curiously mixed sensations that Olive saw Gilbert approach. She had by this time pretty nearly lost her feeling of selfreproach in her natural irritation that he so obstinately persisted in being unreasonable. She was so fully persuaded of the transient nature of his mood that she was unable to appreciate how much reality it had for him. She insisted that he should at once and by an effort of will lay aside all his whimsical unhappiness and meet her on the ground of simple common-sense. For others we are all apt to regard such a disposal of the emotions as not only possible but perfectly obvious and simple. Especially do women, to whom most of all would such a course be impossible, demand and expect it from those with whom they deal. Gilbert was an even-tempered and reasonable youth in the main, but he had not reached the age when the mind controls the feelings at will, and Olive really looked to him for what was beyond his power.

Very likely had she met his advances half-way, had she caused him to feel that he was really committing himself by his desperate avowals and sentimental posings, he would have abandoned his folly much more quickly. Her repulses gave him at once the impetus of an obstinacy born of opposition and it deprived him of any sense of needing to be cautious. Many a man has made a burning declaration of mad passion under the security of knowing it hopeless, which he would be very far from repeating could he be assured of the success of his suit.

The instinctive masculine vanity, moreover, which seeks above all things to escape from ill-starred attachments with dignity unimpaired, urged Gilbert on without his being conscious of the true nature of his feeling. He had no idea of rendering himself impressive except by convincing Mrs. Van Orden that he was heartbroken. He desired to make his case too tragic to be treated lightly. He secretly feared Olive's laughter more than the loss of her love.

The widow bit her lip with annoyance at the thought of the scene which she felt it probable he would bring about. She had no alternative but to meet him, and she summoned all her woman's wit to aid her in this emergency. However kind she might be, and however far she were willing to go in her endeavors to bring him back

to his former friendliness, she had small hope of succeeding any better this morning than on the night before. She greeted him with a smile, but under it she smothered a sigh half of vexation and half of regret.

"Is n't it a superb day," she said, catching at the first idea which presented itself, and which, as is usual in the tricky New England climate, had to do with the weather. "We have had such a thoroughly delightful summer that I am not at all ready to let it go and to take up with September."

He smiled rather forcedly for reply, and seated himself upon the piazza-railing.

"I hope I am not intruding," he said.

"Oh, no," she replied. "Dr. Westacott was seized upon by Dr. Curtis for a consultation over a sick child just above here, and I am delighted to have company."

Gilbert pulled off his cap, and leaning against a convenient pillar he looked off over the bay toward the main land, where already the dimness of gathering autumn hazes softened the outlines of the distant hills. The quiet of the scene, the beauty of the day, the mellowness of the air soothed him unconsciously. He was too young and too full of the animal health of youth not to find it impossible to hold himself in discord with the sweet influences of the time and

place. He even found himself without the disposition to reproach Olive, and only reflected in a vague way that he ought not to be so comfortable and so disposed to harmony.

"I have been quarrelling with your daughter," he observed in a tone which showed little of dissatisfaction and nothing of acrimony.

"With Phœbe?" Olive responded, regarding him curiously and regretfully. "Oh, I am sorry! It is enough, I think, for you to keep getting into disagreements with one member of the family. What did you quarrel about?"

"She said I abused her friends."

"Did you?"

"I said I detested Dr. Westacott."

The words had something of a challenge in them, and Olive could not but feel that the scene she had dreaded was about to be enacted. She was silent only a brief instant, considering in what way she should reply. She was getting very tired of Gilbert's heroics, and she felt moreover that she had tried good-nature and forbearance long enough to have proved pretty conclusively that they were of small avail. She determined to experiment a little in severer tactics, and her manner became grave and cold as she returned,—

"Your remark can hardly be called conspicuous for good taste." He flushed beneath his sun-browned skin, and shifted his position uneasily, glancing with some surprise at Olive as he did so. He was somewhat disconcerted by her tone, its sternness being new to him.

"Perhaps not," he said, hardening his heart against the softened mood into which he had been drifting. "It is generally in poor taste to tell the truth, I find."

She regarded him coldly but keenly, but she made no reply. Had she realized how glad he would be could he stand once more on the old footing of friendship, she might have held out her hand, forgiven the past, and asked him to start anew. As it was, she wondered whether the wiser course were not to quarrel with him definitely and finally, and end the whole matter. She was surprised that he so ignored the scene of the evening before. She began to find him quite as puzzling as he found her. She watched the water and said nothing until he broke out again.

"Is n't it a fact," he demanded, "that the worst social sin is to be honest?"

Olive laughed provokingly.

"When you take to wise epigrams," she commented, "I always know you are acting. Why do you try that sort of humbug on me?"

"Humbug!" he ejaculated, more in surprise than in anger.

"Yes, humbug. Do you suppose I can't tell when you are in earnest? I only wish you knew yourself half as well as I know you."

He was too completely taken aback by this unaccustomed style of speech to reply at once. He had never before felt himself so ridiculous, and he was utterly at a loss how to proceed. It was sufficiently easy to reproach Mrs. Van Orden as long as she took the pleading attitude of their early interviews after Dr. Westacott came, but when she turned on him it was a different matter. He was wounded by her tone, and the hurt was precisely what he most needed to be made to feel. She stung that very vanity which in its boyish wantonness had been carrying him forward and which had supported his anger. He experienced the bitter humiliation of finding himself all at once put in the wrong. Instead of a martyr, he was addressed as an offender, as a pitiful pretender, and was put at once upon the defensive.

Olive made no effort to help him out of his predicament. She was a little weary from the reaction of last night's excitement, and her patience with Gilbert, as has been said, was pretty well exhausted. She felt, too, that it would be undignified to allow an attack upon her be-

trothed to pass unreproved, and she was willing to have Hampton understand once for all that she would not endure his boyish petulance against Dr. Westacott to vent itself in her presence.

She partly appreciated and was partly curious about the effect which her words and manner would produce, and she stood silent, looking over toward Lubec and waiting what her companion might reply.

Gilbert's gaze, too, was fixed upon the distant landscape, but he did not see it. Like a wave there came over him a passion of contrition and self-reproach. The hot tears gushed into his eyes, and a sob choked him. All the happiness of the lovely summer had fallen in ruins about him, and he felt that in some way he had himself brought this catastrophe about. The foolish, burning despair of youth, that absurd and awful abandonment of all joy and hope and selfrespect, surged in his heart. He experienced an impulse to fling himself to the ground and weep like a child. He saw himself as one who has offended past pardon, and who had flung away his happiness forever. He thought of Phœbe, and the pain of losing her was like an actual stab.

It was several moments before he could command his voice, and then, strangling the rising sob in his throat, he said, in a tone so completely heart-broken that while it touched her Olive could scarcely forbear to smile at its exaggeration:—

"I am an ass and a boor. I beg your pardon."

She took a quick step forward, a glad smile springing to her face, and held out both her hands.

"Nonsense!" she said. "You are neither. We all say foolish things sometimes, and you have been mistaken, as anybody might be. Don't be unjust to yourself."

He took her hands in a firm clasp, and looked up into her face with the tears overflowing his eyes. He cleared his throat and forced himself to smile, although the result was rather wan and unmirthful. He accepted her forgiveness as a condemned prisoner welcomes a free pardon. The situation had to him all the tragic intensity that could belong to the most desperate events; and she had never appeared so lovely to him as at this moment when he first admitted fully to himself that he was not in love with her.

"Dear Gilbert," she went on, pressing her advantage with that blessed cunning by virtue of which women work their greatest good and their worst evil, "how miserable these last days have been! I've reasoned with you till it does n't

seem to be of any use, and I made up my mind last night that I had said all I would; but I can't have this wretched nonsense go on. It makes me too unhappy. Why won't you be honest with yourself and own that you don't really want—" she hesitated a second, and then with a happy inspiration concluded, "that you don't want to be Phœbe's papa."

A quick smile broke through his tears. He pressed her hands with sudden fervor, and a laugh rose to his lips.

"Now," he said, "I am really in love with you; and I will own that I have been an obstinate and theatrical fool."

She laughed with mingled glee and nervousness, returning his clasp.

"Oh," she said, with a long sigh of relief, "it is so good to have that misunderstanding over. I must make my confession," she went on, releasing her hands and leaning against the railing. "I was older than you, and I ought to have known what was coming of our friendship. My conscience has pricked me like a hedgehog this last fortnight, and that made it a great deal harder to bear things."

"You have nothing to reproach yourself with," Gilbert responded. "You could n't help my being a fool, and you have been lovely through all my beastly crossness. If you had n't

been so patient, I dare say I should have come to terms long ago."

He was as blissfully happy as he had a few moments before been wretched. The uncomfortable strain of a false position was removed, and he revelled in the delightful sensation of being once more his normal, sunny self. The phrase which Olive had used seemed to show him an escape which he had made from a danger unthought of. He did not say distinctly to himself that to be Phœbe's father would have prevented a closer relation, but the idea was none the less present in his consciousness, and although he had hardly come yet to the point of being aware that he had transferred his affections from the mother to the daughter, he was alive to the undesirability of any barriers between himself and Miss Van Orden.

He drew himself up, and took a full breath of the pure air, while Olive laughed at his change of manner as if she divined the course of his thoughts.

# XIX.

Doubtless there is Wisdom in a Hen.

Youth and Age, iii. 1.

IT was while the party were at the Owen that Mr. Paul Sefton, whose coming had been spoken of, arrived at the Tyn-y-coed. They found him on the piazza with Mrs. Kellogg and Clare when they returned from the hall. That worthy lady had seized upon the new-comer with great promptness, and by a sort of assumption of intimacy had almost persuaded him that it was to see Miss Kellogg that he had come to Campobello; whereas in fact he had left Mt. Desert a fortnight sooner than he intended solely to follow Phœbe Van Orden.

Phæbe greeted him indifferently enough, and then, perceiving how his face fell, she relented so far as to give him a smile sufficiently gracious to restore his cheerfulness. She inquired about the people at Bar Harbor, and what had occurred since she left. The Kelloggs struggled gallantly to hold their own in the conversation, but with little success; and Miss Van Orden was not without a certain mischievous satisfaction in

keeping the talk quite out of their reach while apparently letting it take its own course. Mrs. Kellogg angrily twitched her nose, and at length, appearing to consider discretion the better part of valor, she retreated with great dignity, bearing Clare away with her.

"My daughter will be ready at three, Mr. Sefton," she observed as they moved away; and the tiny side-glance of triumph she cast at Phæbe put the latter on her mettle, and made her definitely determine to tease the Kelloggs as badly as possible.

"You must not make too many engagements, Mr. Sefton," she said, rising. "I want you to know my friends. Come over and let me present you to Miss Hatherway and Miss Mayho."

Mr. Sefton had already the pleasure of their acquaintance, he said, with that simper which Phœbe detested so much that only the amusement of thwarting Mrs. Kellogg made her endure the young man, whom at Mt. Desert she had snubbed unmercifully.

"Kate and I have a plan," Hitty remarked, after the usual greetings had been exchanged. "We are going to have an excursion. It is going to be long enough to be entertaining, and short enough not to be a burden. Will you go?"

Kate laughed.

"That is just like you, Hitty," she said before Phæbe could answer. "You never tell a thing so that anybody can understand it. Why don't you tell her where we are going?"

"Going? Why, over to Friar's Head, of course. Miss Van Orden would know anything so simple as that."

"Is the view pretty?" Phœbe asked, glancing across the bay to the absurd little summer-house perched on the top of the promontory. "Is it worth the climb?"

"Oh, it is n't much of a climb, and the view is lovely. Besides, I want some blue-bells to paint, and they grow all about there."

"When is this great excursion to take place?"

"To-morrow afternoon. Will you go, Mr. Sefton?"

"Delighted, I'm sure," the new-comer responded. "I'm not—er—especially fond of climbing, but—er, of course, I shall—er—be pleased."

Phœbe looked at him with the sense of irritation which always assailed her when Sefton attempted to put two sentences together, drawling out his words as if they were all stuck in a lump. The Baltimorean appeared far more detestable here than even at Bar Harbor. There he had been part of the conventional crowd, and not out of place especially. At Campobello she

found herself in a different and more natural atmosphere, in which Mr. Sefton's manner seemed unreasonably inappropriate and affected. Whether the frank, manly speech of Gilbert Hampton had any more to do with this change in her feelings than the boyish directness of Burt West, it might not be easy to tell.

She turned away from the group a little impatiently.

"Very well," she said. "We will make a pilgrimage to Friar's Head to-morrow; and meanwhile I'm going to luncheon."

Mrs. Van Orden had not come down, and without waiting for her, Phœbe went into the dining-room. She had to pass the table at which Gilbert sat, and as she went by him she was struck with the joyous expression of his face.

"You look delighted about something," she said, lingering a little.

"I am," he answered; "I've made my peace with your mother."

She smiled and went on without replying. When she came out of the dining-room after luncheon, Gilbert stood at the door, and took up the sentence where he had left it.

"And I want to be at peace with her daughter."

She looked him in the eye an instant, as they moved across the hall.

"You have been abominable," she answered, apparently satisfied with the results of her scrutiny; "but I forgive you. Only I sha'n't again. Remember that."

"I'll try not to give you any need to."

Everybody was somewhat languid after the theatricals, and the house was very quiet that day. On the next everything was as usual, and the party started off to visit Friar's Head with as much liveliness as if fatigue had never been known. Clare Kellogg had not been specially invited, but she chose to join the party, walking beside Manton, who was too well-bred to desert her.

The walk to Friar's Head is by no means a long one, and the climb at the last is only mildly stiff. The party walked down the road in straggling order, past the lovely willows which stand in a picturesque row along the bank, and which are so charmingly prominent as one approaches the Tyn-y-coed landing. Burt West was as talkative as usual, delivering himself of a great deal of nonsense at which everybody laughed, although Mr. Sefton at least was for the most part secretly at a loss to understand where the joke came in.

"Do you hear Sefton laugh?" West said aside to Kate. "He does n't know a joke from a cucumber. He's fumble-witted; that's what's the matter with him."

The subject of this not very amiable criticism was walking on one side of Phœbe Van Orden, while Gilbert held his place on the other. The talk was chiefly left to the last two, Sefton contenting himself for the most part with feeble ejaculatory comments. Leaving the road the party struck off through a lane, along which they proceeded in an irregular fashion which soon scattered them.

Phœbe and her two companions were behind the others, and when they reached the foot of the incline which led up to the top of the promontory, the girl observed, quite as if it were what might have been expected,—

"There, this is as far as I am going."

Gilbert laughed, but Sefton stared at her in a dazed sort of way.

"But what—er—are you going to do?" the latter asked.

Phœbe cast her glance around.

"I am going," she answered, pointing with her sunshade over the fence into the wide yard about a farmhouse near which the lane ran, "to go over and sit on that milking-stool."

Gilbert laughed again, but with the appearance of falling instantly into her whimsical mood he went to the bars close at hand, took them down, and stood aside while Miss Van Orden passed through. Then he followed and be-

gan to replace them, leaving Sefton on the outside.

"Say," exclaimed the Baltimorean, staring at him, "are n't you going to let me through?"

"Oh, were you coming?" responded Gilbert, as if the idea were a new one. "All right; put the bars up."

He followed Phœbe, and cast himself on the grass at her side when she seated herself on the three-legged stool which had attracted her attention.

"Don't you think," she observed demurely, looking down at him, "that Mr. Sefton ought to take more exercise?"

Gilbert glanced over to the young man, who was still fumbling with the bars.

"More exercise?" he repeated inquiringly.

"Yes, such as climbing Friar's Head."

She had never before given Gilbert so marked an intimation of especial comradeship, and he did not fail to appreciate the favor.

"You might send him home to get your shawl or something," he suggested. "Or I'll kill him, if you prefer."

The object of these remarks at this moment came up with an injured air.

"What—er—are you—going to do, now you are here?" he asked, seating himself on an old box at a trifling distance.

Miss Van Orden looked around with cool deliberation.

"I am going to study that hen," she replied, regarding a tall and awkward gray fowl who stood looking at the strangers with evident disapproval. "Now I shall see which of you is able to get the most wisdom out of her."

"She does n't look as if she had much in her," Gilbert commented. "Do you mind if I smoke?"

"Yes, I do mind. You are to give your whole attention to that hen now. There is a great deal to be learned from a hen."

The tall gray fowl canted her head to one side, drawing the films up over her beady eyes as if to wipe the pupils, and then dropping them again. Then with great deliberation she raised one foot and slowly advanced a single step toward the group. Again she twisted her head and twinkled her eyes; then catching sight of some unlucky worm in the short grass, she snatched it hastily, yet with no relaxing of her anxious and preternatural gravity. She lifted her foot, curling the dirty yellow toes in absurd imitation of the talons of a hawk.

"I could stands hens better," observed Gilbert, "if they did n't have those white window-curtains to their eyes. They pull them up from

the bottom, too; and that always makes me want to set the dogs on them."

"Boys are always cruel to hens," Phœbe responded. "And to everything else, for that matter."

"Krr-r-rrr," remarked the hen.

"There, you see she agrees with me perfectly."

Gilbert chuckled softly. His eyes were studying the ground about him, and his glance had just lighted upon a pebble. His hand stole softly toward it, while the hen, with a meditative mien, gave one or two dignified scratches and swallowed a bit of gravel for the sake of appearing perfectly at her ease before company. Sefton, who was not too dull to perceive that he was somehow quite out of the spirit of the occasion, and who was troubled by the painfully self-conscious fear that it was possible he was being laughed at, looked uneasily from his companions to the gray hen, who now began in the most casual fashion to occupy herself with her toilet by fettling among the feathers on her breast.

"But I say," he began; and then relapsed into silence.

"Yes?" Phœbe said, turning toward him with a smile of exaggerated sweetness.

"Don't—er—don't you think—er—that's a fool of a hen?"

"No," she replied with much dignity; "it is a most instructive —"

The hen had paused in her manipulation of her feathers to scratch the side of her head with one big, sprawling claw.

"There," interrupted Gilbert. "She is teaching you how to scratch your ear with your toes, Mr. Sefton."

"Be quiet!" Phœbe retorted. "This subject is not to be treated with levity."

"Kurr-kurr-kurrr," cried the hen in doleful plaint

"There is n't much — er — levity in that," observed Sefton with unexpected brilliancy.

"Oh, hens are always complaining," Gilbert said. "They never have the spunk to scold even. They only whine like old women."

He ended his remarks by suddenly flinging the pebble of which he had possessed himself straight at the head of the unlucky hen. It struck her with moderate force, throwing her into that ridiculous ecstasy of fright into which these creatures plunge on the slightest excuse. With a sudden screech she turned and tumbled herself away in wild flight, her head extended until it seemed to be rushing forward and dragging the body after it.

"You horrid boy!" Phœbe cried. "What did you hurt that poor hen for?"

"I did n't hurt her. I simply could n't stand her any longer, — that 's all."

She looked laughing down into his face. She had that morning promised her mother that she would forget all cause of grievance against Gilbert, and it was perhaps in consequence of this pledge that she was so gracious this afternoon.

"I wondered how long you would," she said; "but I am bound to disapprove of you, all the same."

"Your sympathy goes far toward making amends," he answered.

## XX.

HER VERY DANCING WAS COQUETRY.

Youth and Age, iii. 3.

FOR one day, for two days, and for three days, Gilbert was his old joyous self. Indeed, for a whole week he was as jolly and companionable as heart could wish. He devoted himself to Phæbe in the same undisguised and headlong fashion in which earlier in the summer he had devoted himself to Olive, — his zest in this pursuit being certainly not lessened by the fact that both Paul Sefton and Andrew Manton had apparently entered the lists against him.

Life at the Tyn-y-coed went on much as usual. Now that September had come the air was full of talk of approaching departures, and a number of the guests had already left the island. Most of the circle to which the Van Ordens belonged, however, were to remain until after the hop which was to be given in the hall at the Owen. This was to be the dance of the season, it being the intention to conclude the summer festivities with fitting ceremony. It was to end with a cotillon which Mrs. Bodewin Ranger, Mrs. Wilson, and

Olive were to matronize. The widow had protested a little, but secretly she was by no means insensible to the honor of being associated with the two stately old ladies who stood at the head of the Tyn-y-coed social world. It seemed like a formal mark of approval after whatever back-biting Mrs. Kellogg or others might have been guilty of; and as such it could hardly fail to be regarded. Mrs. Wilson, in originally assenting to the arrangement, had been moved by a worldly-wise desire to cover from prying eyes any dissatisfaction she might feel at Olive's course: but now that the lad and Mrs. Van Orden had evidently forgotten all disagreements, and the latter was formally engaged to Dr. Westacott, the match being one of which everybody concerned approved, Mrs. Wilson was heartily glad that Olive had been asked.

It had been arranged that invitations for the german should not be given beforehand; and although that did not prevent Burt West from saying to Hitty, "Say, look here, I expect you to dance the german with me; now don't you go back on a fellow," as a rule, partners had not been engaged. Gilbert had taken it for granted that Phœbe was to dance with him, and great were both his amazement and his wrath when Andrew Manton carried her off under his very eyes, leaving him, so cruel was fate, in a corner

where he was forced to ask Clare Kellogg, or be unpardonably rude. And it was as he led Miss Kellogg to her place that the thought crossed his mind which destroyed the pleasant mood of the last few days. He remembered that on the evening of the theatricals he had said to Olive that he meant to marry Miss Kellogg, and suddenly it occurred to him that he had thus in a manner compromised the girl, and that he was bound as a gentleman to make good his words if she were willing.

The thought came to him with a shock that was almost like a blow. In all the tumultuous mental experiences of the summer, nothing had affected him so strongly before. He felt a sinking of strength, a faintness that was like a pressure on his chest, and the lights of the ball-room swam before him. He was hardly able to arrange his partner's chair before he sank into his own with the feeling that he could not have stood a moment longer. He had a horrible sensation of being entrapped and chained. A bitter anger against the blameless girl beside him rose unreasonably in his heart, and swelled into a blind rage as he looked down the room and saw Phœbe chatting with Manton lightheartedly.

Phœbe was more lovely than ever that evening. She wore the pink crape, and her mother's eyes shone with pride and love as she saw the beautiful girl take her place for the cotillon.

"Your daughter is looking extremely well tonight," Mrs. Bodewin Ranger said graciously, as the matrons sat behind the table piled with bouquets and favors.

"She is indeed," Mrs. Wilson assented. "I never would have believed that she could wear pink, but it's really an inspiration."

"Is n't it?" responded Olive. "I saw a Venetian picture that Ralph Curtis sent home to be exhibited, and in it was a girl with red hair and a pink gown with a crimson handkerchief round her neck. It's the crimson that does it; the dress is hideous until you get that on. I was wild over the idea, and of course as I was too old to wear pink myself I persuaded Phæbe to try it. She and the dress-maker both insisted that it would n't do; but it does do all the same."

"It certainly does. It is wonderfully becoming."

The cotillon had begun, and the couples came to the table for tiny fans, dangling fishes of papier-mâché, insects of straw, little bonbonnières and all the pretty rubbish usually called into requisition on such an occasion.

"Mamma," whispered Phœbe, bending over as she selected an especially startling Japanese fish, "he's in the sulks again—because I danced with Mr. Manton, I suppose. I'm going to take him out and scold him."

She walked down the hall, tied the fish into Gilbert's buttonhole without looking him in the face, and then as he rose she drew away a trifle, apparently studying the effect of the decoration.

"Well," he suggested after a moment, "are we not to dance?"

"Oh, by all means," she answered, flashing into his face the sauciest of glances, "if you are not too ill-natured."

He whirled her away into the waltz, and they were half-way down the hall before he replied.

"Really," he said, "I never meant to be cross again, but I'll confess I am as ugly as sin."

"You have no need to say it. I'm sure you showed it plainly enough."

"Did I really? Am I so awfully transparent?"

"As air. But what are you cross about?"

He set his lips together sternly, and with a desire to hide the secret cause of his unhappiness he made an effort to smile, which from her position in his arms she did not see. He had a mad desire to hold her, and to defy fate to tear her away from him. He hated Clare Kellogg, who just then went by them with Sefton.

"I wanted to dance with you," he said.

"Oh, did you?" she responded. "It is strange it had n't occurred to you to mention it."

He did not reply, and in a moment more the bell sounded, and he had to convey her back to her seat. He was in the next set, and the moment he had seated his partner he hurried across the hall to the favor table.

"Give me something, quick," he said to Olive confidentially. "That long-necked Baltimorean is after her, and I must get there first."

She smiled sympathetically as she handed him a fantastic little dragon of fieriest vermilion hue, which was the first thing upon which she could lay her hand; and her eyes followed him as he hastened back to Phœbe.

"Look here!" exclaimed West, coming up at the same moment with another dragon as luridly green as that which Gilbert held was red, "you've just been dancing with Miss Van Orden, and—"

"I am going to dance with her again, by her leave," interrupted Gilbert, offering his red monster with a mock flourish.

"Do you suppose," asked Phæbe, "that anything would tempt me to have that hideous scarlet dragon about? With my dress and hair it is something simply fiendish."

"Here is just what you want," put in Burt, extending his bizarre creature. "It adds the

one touch of color needed to convert you into a rainbow."

"So I should think! That is as bad as the red one."

"What Miss Van Orden wants," said the voice of Sefton at his elbow, "is this — er — beautiful golden dragon."

He held over West's shoulder a charmingly ugly writhing dragon of gold, which by clever and skilful accident he had selected without a thought of the color of Miss Van Orden's gown.

"Oh, how pretty!" she cried. "You see here is a man who actually knows enough to consider what color a favor ought to be."

Hampton frowned impatiently, but West turned to throw a droll and good-humored glance over his shoulder at the bearer of the golden image.

"You ought to be a matron and give the favors out," he said. "We are standing here so long the time is about up."

The talk really had taken only an instant, but moments in the cotillon are precious. Phœbe flashed a laughing glance about the group.

"I'll let Mr. West hold my bouquet," she said; "and I'll take Mr. Sefton's favor, and I will dance with Mr. Hampton."

West began a protest, the Baltimorean was

too amazed to do anything but stare, while Gilbert and Phœbe swept prettily away into the dance.

Sefton looked after the pair in dazed confusion a second; then he possessed himself of the red favor which Gilbert had flung down, and with it he hurried on to take Clare Kellogg out once more. West quite as promptly deposited the bouquet which Phœbe had thrust into his hands in its owner's chair, and went in search of another partner quite unconcerned.

Olive had from her seat at the end of the room seen enough of the occurrence to make her sure that Phœbe had been doing something saucy.

"I'm sure I don't know what that daughter of mine is doing," she said to Mrs. Wilson; "but I am certain she is in mischief."

"Her mischief is not very serious, I fancy," the other returned. "It must be delightful to chaperone a girl who is such a favorite."

"One needs to invoke the aid of a patron saint pretty often," Olive replied, shaking her head laughingly.

"Who is the patron saint of chaperones?" Mrs. Bodewin Ranger asked, leaning forward to join the conversation.

"I don't know," Olive answered, "but I always supposed it must be Saint Ursula. She

had the care of eleven thousand girls, you know."

Meanwhile Phœbe was saying to Gilbert, —

"I hope you appreciate the honor I have done you. Mr. Sefton will never forgive me."

"I am glad of that," Gilbert returned, made bold by her choice of him; "there will be one less in my way."

She laughed and threw a saucy glance into his face.

"If you knew how stunning you look tonight in that dress," Gilbert ventured, as the warning-bell forced him unwillingly to bring her back to her seat, "you'd be set up with vanity forever."

"Thank you," returned Phœbe. "The compliment is strong, if it does cast a doubt on my understanding."

"Is Hampton complimenting you at the expense of your understanding?" asked Manton, chancing to overhear the words. "It is probably because he thinks your understanding is too broad to mind a trifling draft on it."

Gilbert felt his smile to become somehow rather constrained, and he hastened away to his own seat. As he did so he encountered the eyes of Clare Kellogg, whose first care on being seated had been to look after her partner. He frowned involuntarily, averting his eyes, and sat

down in a mood far too sullen for good breeding. He reflected that Miss Kellogg was not only his partner, but that it was his duty to ask her to marry him. He wondered whether Manton was in earnest in his attentions to Miss Van Orden, and he tried to decide whether Phæbe cared for either Andrew or himself. He said to himself that it was folly to regard his petulant words to Olive as of any force, and that not only had he certainly never seriously meant them, but that Clare would never know of them. He possessed, however, an instinctive chivalry, which was noble, if somewhat Quixotic; and with an inward groan he cursed himself as a knave for the thought. He knew he had been a fool, but he was determined at least that he would not moreover be a sneak, whatever might be the cost of honesty.

## XXI.

### EMOTIONS LIKE A WEATHERCOCK.

Youth and Age, iv. 3.

GILBERT was restless and moody next day, and found himself the worst possible company. He joined Olive and Dr. Westacott on the piazza; but after sitting in gloomy silence for a few moments, he rose and took himself abruptly away.

"Are you going?" Olive called after him. "I was just going to ask you to come for a drive."

"Thank you," he returned; "I think I won't go. I must write some letters."

"Write letters in the morning? Who ever heard of such a thing?"

Gilbert muttered some unintelligent thing about business, and kept on his way, vexed with himself for being out of sorts. Dr. Westacott looked after him with a smile which deepened into a laugh.

"What's Phœbe been doing to him?" he asked.

"Phœbe?"

"Of course; Phœbe is responsible for his moods now, is n't she?"

Olive clasped her hands thoughtfully upon her knee and looked at her companion earnestly.

"Rufus," she said, "you don't suppose there is any danger of his being really serious about Phœbe, do you?"

He laughed again provokingly, regarding her with a glance both fond and humorous.

"That was what you wanted, was n't it?"

"What I wanted!" echoed Olive in indignant surprise. "Rufus Westacott, do you suppose I want anybody in love with Phæbe at her age?"

"Hu—m," responded her lover, meditatively; "then you don't think he is?"

She leaned forward and pinched the back of his large and handsome hand with a girlish gesture. Then she threw back her head and laughed, recovering her usual dignity of manner.

"Of course, I don't think he is. Phœbe would know how to prevent any such nonsense as that, I should hope."

"Oh, very likely. She'd get that from her mother; but suppose she did n't want to."

"Now, Rufus Westacott," Mrs Van Orden said, turning upon him a glance meant to be severe, "I will not have you talk such non-

sense. Here at Campobello the children don't flirt, I'd have you understand; and Phœbe is too sensible to get to philandering, even if anybody wanted her to. It is a preposterous notion, and it is just like a man to misunderstand."

Whatever were Dr. Westacott's private opinions upon the subject, he said no more, but contented himself with smiling, still in inscrutable fashion. He and Hampton were getting on very well now that the great question of rivalry was disposed of, and he had had opportunity of seeing a good deal of the lad and of his devotion to Miss Van Orden. He had, however, not the slightest objection to Gilbert's making love to Phæbe as much as he chose, and having relieved himself of all responsibility by this half-warning to Mrs. Van Orden, he was not at all disposed to further interference.

Olive rapidly reviewed the situation in her mind; but like most mortals she looked only to see what arguments she could find to strengthen her own position; and the result, as is usual in such cases, was merely the confirmation of her previous belief. Her brow cleared as she thought from the faint frown of anxiety it had taken on at the idea of a fresh entanglement in an unreasonable fondness on the part of Gilbert for her daughter. Everything else out of the

question, she had profound faith in that young woman's ability to keep a dozen lads in order; and besides she could see herself that the relations between the young people were perfectly frank and harmless. She might speak to Phœbe, but after all such a precaution was not only superfluous, but might put ideas into the girl's head that it was quite as well without. She would keep her eyes open, of course; although she was sure there was no occasion whatever for extra watchfulness. And so she dismissed the whole matter from her mind, and brought the conversation back to something they had been discussing before Gilbert's appearance on the piazza.

Meanwhile Gilbert had joined a group standing in the hall about Tomah, the Indian who is chiefly responsible for the strangely ornamented boxes of birch-bark which are the favorite souvenirs of Campobello. The dark old man is an interesting specimen of his race, a thing which can truthfully be said of few of his tribe. He can be induced upon occasion to discourse with perfect good faith and with simple picturesqueness concerning the wizard-god Mikamwes, with whose weirdly absurd image his wares are sometimes adorned; of Mikwidihamin and other supernatural beings of attributes no less perplexing than the orthography of their names. He

has a certain dry sense of humor, somewhat dull in its glow, like a bit of touch-wood in his native forests, and it is moreover part of his profession to appear amiable.

As Gilbert came up old Tomah had just unwrapped a very pretty card-box, the edge of the cover bearing the legend "Kolele Mooke," and the whole surface richly adorned with curious devices. The magician Mikamwes, in the guise of a squirrel smoking a long pipe, decorated the top; a fantastic procession of running figures surrounded the sides, in somewhat distant suggestion of the shapes in a Greek frieze; while even the bottom was enlivened with a flock of ducks, or, as Tomah was pleased to call them, of "seeps."

Paul Sefton reached forward and took the box out of the Indian's hands.

"That's just what I want," he said, with unusual briskness. "How much — er — is to pay?"

Tomah regarded him in silence a moment, and then with great deliberation reached out his dusky hand and repossessed himself of the box.

"Me no make him for you," he observed in his guttural Indian voice. "Me make him for—"

He stopped and looked about. He had made the box according to Gilbert's especial directions, given early in the summer, one day when Olive chanced to say she had nothing to keep her cards in. Tomah had forgotten Hampton's name, but now when his eye rested upon him he instantly recognized his customer, and proceeded in broken English to explain that the article was made to this gentleman's order. Gilbert took it with rather a gloomy face, reflecting that he did not know what to do with it, and then that he could give it to Mrs. Wilson. While he was paying for it, Sefton came round to him.

"See here," he said, "I—er—that is, I promised that box to—er—to Miss Kellogg for a philopena."

Gilbert made no reply to this remark, but finished making change with Tomah. Then he put away his pocket-book, and turned toward Mr. Sefton.

"That is unfortunate," he said.

The other stared at him in a dazed sort of way, and proceeded to explain that Miss Kellogg had been delighted with the box the moment Tomah had unrolled it, and that as he owed her a philopena, he had instantly promised to buy it for her.

"But you could n't," Gilbert returned coolly.
"I ordered it last July sometime."

He really cared very little about the box now

that he did not intend to give it to Olive, but he did not like Sefton, and he was not pleased with the idea of the young man's giving presents to Miss Kellogg. The Baltimorean, however, was in earnest, having been spurred to extra exertion by a sharp word from Clare when she saw Gilbert take possession of the coveted trifle. He begged to know if Gilbert had any especial use for the box, or if so whether he was not willing to wait for Tomah to make another. Hampton was ready to yield when he chanced to let his eye fall on Miss Kellogg, who stood on the other side of the hall. She was watching him keenly, and there was a gleam of malice in her glance which made him say to Sefton rather abruptly, —

"Excuse me, but you had better get Tomah to make you a box, if you want one."

He turned on his heel and went over to Clare Kellogg.

"I ordered this ever so long ago," he said, "for Mrs. Van Orden; so I can't let you have it. I'm sorry."

Clare regarded him with a cold light in her pale eyes.

"And shall you give it to her now?" she asked with impertinent significance.

Gilbert flushed; but he had presence of mind enough not to retort angrily.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Oh, I did n't know but now that she is engaged —"

She left her sentence unfinished, glanced across to Miss Van Orden, and looked at him with an irritating air of knowingness.

"I might give it to her daughter?" he inquired. "That is a capital idea. I will."

He left her to recover from her vexation as she could, and carried the box to Phœbe, who was leaning on the arm of a chair in which sat Kate Hatherway, putting the finishing touches to the historic blue-silk cap.

"Here, Miss Van Orden," he said. "I had this made for you before I ever even saw you. Receive it as a token of my undying esteem and wonderful foresight."

"Oh, don't give it to her," cried Kate. "I'll give you this cap for it. It really is all done but fastening on this tassel."

"It is too late," Phœbe retorted, taking the box. "It is already mine. I am very much obliged. I don't often play cards," she went on, taking off the cover and examining the partition within, "but mamma insists I shall learn whist against the days when I am a lonely old maid; so this will be useful, as well as timely."

"Do see Mr. Sefton trying to give Tomah an order," remarked Hitty, coming up. "He gets in so many 'er's' that Tomah can't understand half he says."

"He'd better get Clare Kellogg to help him," Kate said.

"Oh, it's for her benefit he's giving the order."

Gilbert started at the coupling of Sefton's name with that of Clare Kellogg. He had not before considered whether there was anything in the relations between these two, although he had noticed that they were much together; and he remembered now that before Sefton's arrival he had heard talk of some flirtation the year before. It was remarkable how much the idea that there might be something serious in Sefton's attentions strengthened Gilbert's great moral resolve to be true to the declaration of his own intentions regarding Clare which he had with such foolish rashness made to Olive. He was not conscious of playing the hypocrite with himself, and he so far bejuggled his judgment that he almost persuaded himself that he was jealous of the favor Miss Kellogg showed the Baltimorean. He saw in a moment's glancing back that if he had not been so absorbed in considering how Phœbe treated Sefton, he must have noticed the fact that Mrs. Kellogg and Clare had largely taken possession of that young man, and that the persistent coldness toward

him of Miss Van Orden was beginning to bear its legitimate fruit.

An amusing complexity of sentiments moved him. He was glad to have Clare Kellogg taken off his hands, yet the masculine jealousy which is ready to awake when any other man is favored by any woman, stirred faintly in his heart. He found in the assurance that Clare Kellogg and Sefton were evidently drawing nearer together a new confidence in provoking fate in his own behalf by proposing to her; and withal he seemed in the whole matter to be possessed of a strange double consciousness, so that he knew the unreality of his emotions while still he felt them keenly.

## XXII.

ALL THE WILD WINDS OF HEAVEN.

Youth and Age, v. 2.

THE winds were beating against the house as the sea-birds strike their wings against the lighthouse lantern in a night of tempest. The sodden leaves were driven furiously along, the trees bent and writhed, and the rain was dashed against the windows like hail.

A group of men were about the big fireplace in the smoking-room, the younger ones doing most of the talking.

"Oh, there's nothing easier in the world than getting your excuses allowed at Harvard if you only use discretion," Burt West declared. "I got a patent-medicine almanac, and had all the diseases in it, — checked them off with a blue pencil whenever I wrote an excuse; and I'll tell you something that will always work; say you cannot leave your room on account of corns. There's no getting away from that."

The ready laugh greeted the ingenuity of this device, but Manton rejoined,—

"I know something that is better even than that. I had an attack of the lumbago whenever I wanted to cut, all last term. It works to a charm, for the lumbago comes and goes, so that you can have it one day and not the next. I was afraid the Faculty would n't know enough to appreciate that fact, and I thought of sending them a circular about lumbago; but apparently they knew. Very likely they'd had it themselves when they were in college."

"Rheumatism was my standby," Hampton observed, lighting a fresh cigarette; "but unfortunately I forgot once, and casually remarked to the proctor that I'd never had a sick day in my life. He looked at me with a funny twist to his eye. 'I've noticed you have the rheumatism a good deal,' he said. Of course, I tried to patch things up, but my next rheumatism excuse was n't allowed; so I had to fall back on colds and transient kind of things."

"It is a great deal more convenient," remarked Manton, twisting a roll of fragrant Latakia into a crumpled cigarette paper, "to have some steady trouble,—something that is chronic but not fatal. It's a great strain on the mind inventing a new excuse every time; you might as well go to recitation and have done with it."

West rose and walked to the window, looking out on the wet landscape, and at the beating rain. The sea was of purple blackness, over which hurried the white crests of the waves, like flocks of frightened gulls skurrying before the wind. The lawn and the islands, which in the sunlight yesterday had still looked green and suggestive of summer, were to-day gray and sombre and autumnal, soaked by the rain and bereft of all warmth and life. The leaves of the trees were swept off in every blast, and clung in wet desperation against anything on which they were thrown, only to be the next moment torn away again and once more hurried on.

"Well, I call this a cheerful kind of a day," West observed, standing with his feet set far apart, and occupying himself with filling the brier-wood pipe he particularly affected. "This is a regular howler."

"The line gale," suggested Mr. Bodewin Ranger, who had strolled into the smoking-room, a place which he did not as a rule affect, and who was rather too conscious of the honor he was conferring on his companions.

"It is rather early for the line gale is n't it, sir?" Gilbert asked.

"Oh, I fancy one September storm can be called a line gale as well as another," was the reply. "All that is required is that it shall be severe enough."

"I should hate to be the man that invented the line," observed West sagely, coming back to his chair by the fire.

"Invented the line?" repeated Mr. Ranger interrogatively.

"Why, the man that invented the line is of course responsible for all the damage the line gale does."

"There, Burt," Manton said, beginning a fresh cigarette, "if you can't lead up to a joke with less trouble than that, you'd better go to a few minstrel shows and take lessons."

West retorted with some idle jest, while Mr. Bodewin Ranger smiled indulgently, as might one who regards the antics of a favorite kitten. The dashing of the rain on the piazza roof and the sound of the piano in the parlor filled the pause which followed, and then as an unusually loud burst of music was heard, Dr. Westacott asked, "Who is playing?"

"Miss Kellogg and Sefton are playing duets," Gilbert answered, scowling as a crash in the bass indicated that the player of the second part had come to grief.

- "I think that's a mash," observed Burt dispassionately.
  - "On which side?" asked Manton.
- "That's a question," West returned. "She—or rather her mother—seems to run things."

"I should think she must be pretty fond of him," Andrew commented, rolling another of his innumerable cigarettes, "or she could n't stand his playing."

Nobody seemed to feel called upon to dispute the truth of this proposition, and the talk was given a turn toward nautical matters by an observation of Mr. Crawford.

"The trouble with my sail is that it's too tight in the throat, and spills the wind out of the middle."

Gilbert rose and threw the end of his cigarette into the fire. He was restless with the uneasiness of youth, and as he sauntered into the hall he remembered vividly the rainy morning when he had played duets with Clare Kellogg. was able now to smile at the passionate anger he had felt toward Olive that day, and he was able to see how much wiser than he she had been. He was still unsettled in regard to his duty to Clare. Every day it had become more and more difficult for him to feel that she had any claim upon him, and every day he had given himself up more entirely to the delight of Phœbe Van Orden's companionship. The dowagers smiled wisely when he set off to ride or to walk with the daughter, as before he had escorted the mother, and Mrs. Wilson had gone so far as to confide to Mrs. Bodewin Ranger

that she felt satisfied that her boy was likely to settle things very satisfactorily after all, although, she added, both of the pair were very young. Back of all else in Gilbert's mind, meanwhile, lay the consciousness that he had declared to Olive his purpose to marry Clare Kellogg, and the conviction, hardly so genuine as he supposed it but sufficiently strong to make him uncomfortable, that this bound him to offer himself to the girl. He managed, half unintentionally, to let Mrs. Van Orden into the secret of his feelings one afternoon.

"But, Gilbert," she remonstrated aghast, "you cannot mean that you seriously think a foolish speech to me, made when you were angry, commits you to anything."

"I certainly do," he answered, with troubled face, his resolve rather strengthened by her opposition. "I had no right to take any girl's name, and —"

"Nonsense!" Olive broke in impatiently. "Don't be Quixotish. Nobody knows it but you and me."

"But I said it, all the same."

"Suppose you did. We all say foolish things."

"But this is different. It puts her in such a position."

"Gilbert Hampton," Olive exclaimed, striking

his fingers sharply with her riding whip, "sometimes you make me so angry that I want to beat you. You are more silly than ten girls could be. How does it put her in a position of any sort, when nobody knows it?"

"Well," Gilbert returned, with a sigh which had in it something of the relief of a person who is obstinately holding to an opinion pretty largely for the sake of being argued down, "I always said I'd never do anything that would make me ashamed to look my dogs in the face. When my big mastiff puts his paws on my knees and looks into my eyes I like to think the beast is n't worshipping a humbug, don't you see?"

She regarded him with mingled admiration and fondness, but she either perceived or chose to assume some faint suggestion of affectation in what he said.

"You are a humbug," she told him. "You would find it harder to hold up to these great moral theories if Mr. Sefton did n't engross. Clare's time now, so that you are not put to the test."

He flushed, but made no reply, and Olive never knew how near home her shaft struck. The remark was an unwise one, since in a manner it challenged Gilbert to prove his sincerity; and it strengthened his purpose by its appeal to the obstinacy which is never lacking in the composition of a genuine man, and which is especially manifest if he is very young. Somewhat the feeling in Hampton's mind changed its form, since now it took rather the shape of the need of demonstrating to Olive his honesty than of being chivalrous for the sake of his own self-esteem; but his determination was strengthened.

He thought of this now as he walked toward the fireplace in the hall before which a group of girls were sitting in their favorite spot. He looked at Phœbe's pretty head relieved against the light of the narrow window beside the hall door, and the more keenly its beauty touched him, the more firmly he steeled his heart against forsaking his resolve. With an inconsistency characteristic of his sex, however, he hastened to expose himself now as on every possible occasion to the dangerous delight of being near Phœbe, the fact that he was resolved to marry Clare Kellogg, or that he supposed himself fixed in that determination, perhaps appearing to him a reason why he should avail himself of such pleasure as still lay within his reach. Most mortals feel that a grand act of self-sacrifice is an item on one side of the personal account only fairly to be balanced by a great many small self-· indulgences on the other; and Gilbert's ethics, however exalted, were still those of a boy.

"Down on Cape Cod," Hitty Mayho was

saying, "they call our name 'Maro,' and father says that when he was a boy they pronounced it 'Mare.'"

"Is this a discussion on philology?" Gilbert asked. "It looks more like a sewing-circle."

"It is a religious ceremony," Phœbe said, lifting her face in a frank way she had which he found most charming. "Don't you know that embroidery is one of the mysteries?"

"Did you ever see one of those English women who came over here a few years ago to teach Kensington embroidery?" asked Kate Hatherway. "It was too funny for anything, the way they talked about the stitch as if it were an awful science into which only the select few could be initiated."

"Oh, I know them," Phæbe returned; "they almost demanded a sworn pedigree before they'd give you a lesson. We had two decayed gentlewomen in New York that used to remonstrate with tears in their eyes at my levity. They wanted me to practice eight hours a day."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Gilbert in dismay. "You didn't really do it?"

"Oh, no; I was n't a decayed gentlewoman, and so I let myself off with an hour or so."

The duet in the parlor, in which the unfortunate Baltimorean had been going more and more hopelessly astray, now came to an untimely end amid horrible discords which caused even him to give up altogether, and at that moment Mrs. Kellogg appeared at the door of the parlor with a skein of silk dangling from her hand.

"Do you mind holding my silk for me, Mr. Hampton," she said. "You are the only man in the house but Mr. Ranger who has any patience."

He turned and followed her into the parlor, hearing Hitty mutter something about virtue's being its own reward. Mrs. Kellogg seated herself upon a bamboo settee near the door, and, Gilbert, taking his place on the other end of it, held his hands to receive the bright crimson silk. As he took the skein Clare came by, on her way from the piano.

"You came to grief in that last movement," Gilbert said to her, simply for the sake of saying something.

"Mr. Sefton is a little out of practice," she returned stiffly, keeping on her way.

Mrs. Kellogg regarded her companion severely. A cruel light shone in her eye, and it was evident that she was intent upon mischief.

"You are too critical, Mr. Hampton," she said; "although," she added, bending forward and dropping her voice, "it is natural that you should be especially interested in Clare's music."

He looked at her in some surprise, but he

had learned a good deal of worldly wisdom since the summer began, and he replied in an easy and natural tone:—

"Oh, of course; I am always interested in music, and Miss Kellogg plays so very well that it is a pity she should n't have a better player to support her."

Mrs. Kellogg bridled with increased severity of expression.

"It is natural, I suppose," was her reply, "that you should feel displeased with Mr. Sefton, but it is hardly kind to attack him behind his back."

Gilbert laughed, not ill-naturedly, yet with some trace of the irritation which Mrs. Kellogg always aroused in him.

"Why should I be displeased with Mr. Sefton?" he inquired. "I'm sure I hardly know the fellow."

"Is it because you hardly know him that you speak of him as a fellow?" Mrs. Kellogg returned, bending forward as if to untangle the silk upon his fingers, and speaking in a low tone. "I asked you to hold this silk because I wanted to say how much I sympathize with you, and that I hope you won't let what has happened change your feelings toward me."

Gilbert regarded her with mingled perplexity and displeasure. He knew she was deliberately

attempting to be disagreeable, but the conversation had an artificial strain which rendered it difficult for him to understand its real purport. He was too well aware of Mrs. Kellogg's sharpness of speech and her general temperament to suppose that she was wasting any genuine pity on him, but what had occurred that could give her the opportunity to affect a sympathetic air, he was at a loss to tell.

"But what has happened?" he asked bluntly.

"Have n't you guessed?" she asked with so self-conscious an air that the thought flashed through Gilbert's mind that one would from her manner suppose that Mrs. Kellogg might herself have found a man bold enough to lead her a second time to the altar. He began dimly to suspect what was coming, but he shook his head, cunningly slipping off a couple of twists of the crimson silk so that he could lean back against the arm of the settee, and his companion was deprived of her excuse to be so close to him.

"You bear it so well," she murmured. "And everybody has noticed how devoted you have been."

The words seemed to Gilbert to apply only to his relations to Olive, and he became suddenly very grave and distant.

"I am sure I am obliged to everybody," he said stiffly, "for medding with my affairs."

"Oh, but everybody could see; and now that Clare is engaged, of course they feel for you."

"Miss Kellogg engaged!" he cried, so loudly and so joyously that everybody in the parlor heard him. "I am very glad to hear it. I congratulate you, I am sure."

Mrs. Kellogg looked at him with ill-concealed anger. She had been hoist with her own petard, since it would be worse than idle to pretend that a young man who could receive the news of a betrothal in this manner was a slighted lover. She had deliberately set to work to humiliate Gilbert, but had she known his foolish scruples and the cause he had for rejoicing in Clare's engagement, she might have been spared her present embarrassment. She felt, rather than saw, the smile which the ladies in the room could not wholly repress; but she made an effort still to hold her own. The end of the skein of silk slipped over Gilbert's fingers, and Mrs. Kellogg rose, winding it about the ball.

"Thank you," she said, "for holding my silk, and thank you still more for taking the blow so bravely."

But the lad laughed frankly and openly.

"You've no occasion to thank me," he returned. "I'm sure I am delighted with the news."

## XXIII.

How was the News Relished?

Youth and Age, ii. 5.

GILBERT returned to the group by the hall fire in fine spirits, and drew a chair up so as to be near Miss Van Orden, who was dressed in a wonderfully fitting gown of dark blue cloth.

"Did you know Miss Kellogg was engaged?" he asked, naturally speaking of what was uppermost in his mind.

"No, is she really? You don't seem wholly broken-hearted over it."

"Me? I am delighted."

Phæbe regarded him keenly. Then she leaned back in her chair and examined with close attention the embroidery upon which she had been working.

"I do not see," she remarked, "why you should care especially."

He flushed a little, in his transparent boyish fashion.

"Why," he answered rather confusedly, "one is always expected to be delighted at an engagement."

"Oh, then it is merely general philanthropy."

He was too honest to assent, and too conscious of his real feelings to pass the matter carelessly.

"What a keen questioner you are," he said. "You should have been a lawyer."

"Thank you," she returned, "but I am not strong-minded."

He leaned forward toward her, putting both his sun-browned shapely hands on the arm of her chair.

"I should n't be pleased at every engagement," he said, somewhat absurdly.

"You must promise to be pleased with mine," she retorted. "I mean to marry some rich old man that will pet me and let me have my own way always. I'll send you an invitation to the wedding."

Matters were getting serious with Gilbert, since he found it impossible to jest on the subject of Phœbe's marriage. A sudden thrill ran through him at the idea of being a guest at her wedding, and the foolish fellow really turned cold at the very thought.

He laughed a little from mere nervousness, and made some chance remark about her embroidery. He felt as if a load had been lifted from his heart in this solution of his difficulty in regard to Clare Kellogg, and he was fully

enough aware now how earnest his feelings in regard to Phœbe had become. He sat among the group saying little, as Kate turned back from the wrangle with Hitty which had given opportunity for his brief conversation with Phœbe; and as the idle chatter around him went on, he enjoyed to the full the delight of being near the girl he loved, of watching her slender hands and of hearing her voice. He saw in Clare's engagement the removal of the last obstacle between himself and Miss Van Orden, and with his old boyish confidence, he almost assumed that he had already won her.

He was not, indeed, so confident that he had ceased to be jealous of Andrew Manton, and when the latter appeared with the proposition that they all go and bowl, Gilbert watched keenly to see how Phœbe received him. He was not aware how much this jealousy had helped to keep him beside her when his conscience had bidden him go to Miss Kellogg, but he did say plainly to himself now that he would not have Manton interfering with his plans and hopes. He joined the bowling party, and his manner toward Phœbe became so marked that the others noticed, and remarked upon it in joking asides to each other, to which he was wholly obtuse, but which did not escape the maiden's keener perceptions.

"How delightful these rainy days are," he said to her, as they chanced to stand a little apart from the rest of the party.

"That depends," returned she demurely.

"Oh, yes; of course it depends," he answered with new boldness; "but of course I meant when you are here."

She opened her lips to make him some saucy retort, but her eyes met his, and her glance fell.

"It is my turn," she said hastily, endeavoring to hide her confusion. "I want that ball with the white spot on it. It's lucky."

She stepped forward to roll, receiving the ball from the hands of Gilbert, who offered it with an air so devoted that Kate whispered to Hitty,—

"For Heaven's sake, Hitty, hold on to me or I shall propose to somebody on the spot. Is Campobello to have three engagements in one summer?"

"I think," returned Hitty, "that it is positively dreadful to see a boy spoony. There's something sickening in anybody in love."

"Unless it's with you," corrected Kate, laughing.

"Come on here, Kate Hatherway," called out Burt West. "Don't be whispering over there and keep everybody waiting for you."

Phœbe and Gilbert stood back together again, while the others took their turns.

"How did you know," asked Phœbe, "that I was looking through the blinds yesterday when you went down to go to sail? You lifted your hat and looked up."

He laughed gleefully.

"I wanted to know if you were there," he responded. "You said you were going to your room, and I thought I'd see if you'd look after me."

"You impertinent creature! I'll never look after you again. The vanity of it!"

"You need n't have told me that you saw me," Gilbert chuckled, delighted at the success of his trick.

Meanwhile, in the parlor, Mrs. Kellogg, not wholly satisfied with the success of her interview with Gilbert, had resumed her place among the matrons, who were endeavoring, by all the devices known to feminine patience, to get through the long morning. Her remarks to Hampton had been inaudible, but his replies had been heard by everybody in the room, and it was well enough understood what tone she had taken with him.

"Do I understand, Mrs. Kellogg," Olive asked sweetly, "that we are to congratulate your daughter?"

"Yes, certainly," was the reply. "Of course the engagement is not supposed to be known

yet, but among friends I don't mind speaking of it."

"It is a very pleasant ending for the summer, I'm sure," observed Mrs. Crawford, anxious to say something agreeable.

"Yes," Mrs. Kellogg said, gratification rendering her a little indiscreet. "Clare has had so much attention that I have been afraid it would make her over-particular; but this arrangement is perfectly satisfactory."

Mrs. Wilson looked up from her knitting.

"As you say," she observed with as close an approach to malice as was possible for her kindly soul, "girls who receive so much attention are apt to be long in getting exactly suited."

"And just that sort of attention, too," Mrs. Bodewin Ranger added suavely.

The point of the remark was emphasized by the silence which followed it. Mrs. Kellogg felt the thrust, but the consciousness that the engagement was an assured fact rendered her bold.

"I hope," said she meaningly, "that nobody will take it to heart. I must say that I am relieved that in one quarter the news is taken so bravely."

She pursed her lips, felt her nose, and spoke with much distinctness; but Olive responded with a frank laugh.

"Come, Mrs. Kellogg," she said briskly, "we are too old to suppose all the men are in love with any one girl. I have n't observed any deep spirit of depression settling over the house because Mr. Sefton is so fortunate as to have won Miss Kellogg's favor."

Mrs. Wilson rose, as if the conversation were getting dangerous and she wished to break up the circle; but Mrs. Bodewin Ranger had all the season regarded Mrs. Kellogg with disfavor, and she found that lady's conversation this morning so little to her taste that she could not resist the temptation of striking one blow more.

"It is pleasant to see the interest all the young people at the Tyn-y-coed take in each other," she remarked, in her most tellingly gracious manner. "I could n't help overhearing how pleased Mr. Hampton was when you told him the news."

Mrs. Kellogg flushed and threw back her head with the air of an old war-horse who hears the trumpets; but she was only too well aware that she had not an ally in the circle, and her crest drooped again.

"Yes," she answered constrainedly, "he seemed pleased."

## XXIV.

A BOAT IS AN OPPORTUNITY.

Youth and Age, iv. 3.

T was one of those days when the sea seems perfectly opaque under a cloudy sky. The waves were of that indescribable lustrous gray which is never seen in the whole wide world save in sea-water, with shades of dove-color and lead, and here and there with glints of green which would have been black but for some buried reflected light which seemed to well up through it. The sun now and then lightened through the clouds as if it were minded to break out altogether; then the sky would darken once more, and the waves lose the brief dim shimmer which had for an instant silvered their oily, undulating swells. In the north the sky showed streaks of pale green, such as follows a winter sunset, and all in the distance was the sea covered with mists, from which here and there the sails of passing vessels detached themselves, gray like the backs of the mackerel-gulls which in flocks of hundreds were here and there settling upon the water with a flutter of white wings

like a snow storm, and feeding on the wreckage of unfortunate squids cast up by the late storm and now afloat.

The Tyn-y-coed people were off for the last excursion of the season. The day was by no means propitious, but as Mrs. Wilson and her party were to leave Campobello on the following morning, it was decided not to postpone the visit to the Magaguadavic River which had long been planned. There were about a score of people on the little steam-tug which had been chartered for the day, and beneath the gray sky they were making their way into the mouth of the St. Croix River, with the wind pretty nearly dead against them.

"For my part," Phœbe declared to the group half-reclining amid numerous rugs and shawls on top of the cabin, "I only hope we may not turn into an Arctic expedition before we get home. I am sure it is cold enough."

"Are you cold?" asked West, ostentatiously tucking a railway-rug more closely about him. "That's a great mistake. I always make it a point not to be cold."

"Girls," exclaimed Hitty, "this is our last chance to throw Mr. West overboard, and we have promised all summer to do it. There's no time like the present."

"If he goes, do save his rug," Phœbe re-

sponded; but since Gilbert had bestowed upon her one which he carried, she had really not much excuse for complaint.

"If he had any politeness at all," Kate observed, "he would give us that rug. This wind goes through me like a knife."

"You must think I'm a Simple-Susan sort of a fellow," was Burt's rejoinder, "if you suppose I am going to freeze for the sake of politeness. If you are cold, why don't you go below and chaperone Sefton and Miss Kellogg?"

"Thank you, I'd rather be cold. I can't stand his voice."

"It is a flat-footed voice, that's a fact; but she likes it, so it's all right."

The water was growing yellower, as if ochery loam had stained it. Strange long streaks stretched hither and thither amid the dark gray waves, as if a gigantic finger dipped in clay had been drawn across the surface of the water. The hills on the shore a few miles away were smoke-colored and puce and sepia, their outlines confused with trailing mists. Patches of forest lay black on their sides, or brightened into gloomy green, with here and there a gleam as of wind-beaten fires where the red and yellow leaves of autumn had not been wrenched off by the late storm. The wind whistled as it hurried by, and the spray from the bow of the little

steamer was sometimes dashed on the pilothouse windows; but the company were pretty good sailors, and the party if rather chilly were at least saved from the indignity of seasickness.

They took their course across the bay and neared the mouth of the Magaguadavic, which expends all the labor of being so absurdly spelled only to have its elaborate syllables reduced in common pronounciation to plain "Macadavie." The scenery here is enchanting. Red-sandstone cliffs guard the approach to the mouth of the stream, which is one of those fjord-like openings quite as much inlet as river. On one promontory is perched a trig little lighthouse like a truncated pyramid, amid a grove from which gleamed softly the crooked and whimsical trunks of the white birches, as variable as the freaks of a young damsel. The leaves were beautifully colored, and where the cliffs were pictured in the water the reflection shone with their jewel hues, until nearer the shore, as the shadow deepened, it melted into a deep and dusky green, that in turn fell away to black in niches and tiny caves.

"'Then dry your tears, lov-li Polly Ann,'"
sang Burt West, interrupting himself to exclaim,
"By Jove! That's a good looking shore, all
the same."

"'And let your weeping be;
For there's far more water in the salt, salt sea
Than in all the tears you shed for me;
And off to sea go I, Polly Ann,
Though my heart is true to thee.'"

"Did you ever hear such nonsense?" asked Hitty. "What difference did it make how much water there was in the sea?"

"Why, don't you see," West explained, "he was just giving her a hint that he was likely to get plenty of brine without her turning on the hose."

"Did you ever see anything so pretty as that shore?" demanded Kate. "It's the loveliest thing I've seen this summer."

"It's as pretty as any of them, as Miss Mayho always says," returned Burt. "Do you suppose they take that lighthouse in nights?"

"It is only a make-believe, put there for decorative purposes," Phœbe said. "You can see yourself that there is n't any way of getting at it."

"Perhaps the whole shore is only painted and put up for the benefit of visitors. If so, it shows enterprise as well as taste."

"Take a long look at it," West said. "This is the last trip of the season, and all the picnicking you get for your money, you've got to get to-day."

"Oh, bother!" remonstrated Hitty. "What do you want to bring that up for? Who wants to think of that?"

"Mr. West has been in a wild state of hilarity all day," observed Kate, "just because I happened to mention that we are going away to-morrow."

"Oh, it is n't that," suggested Manton, "it is because he will have two days of quiet to do a year's work in German before he goes home himself."

"That's right," Burt responded. "Bring up that confounded condition again. There has n't been a day this summer when it has n't been flung in my face. When are you going, Hampton?"

"Oh, I don't know. To-morrow, perhaps."

"To-morrow?" Phæbe asked in a voice which betrayed quite as much regret as surprise. "I thought you were n't going until we did."

"I don't know what I shall do. It occurred to me to-day that perhaps I might as well go."

"Oh, do go, Mr. Hampton," urged Kate. "A man is always so convenient on the boat."

"Oh, he won't go," West said confidently. "He's too dull. Blessings brighten as they take their flight, and he is as dull as a preacher."

"By that test," retorted Gilbert good-naturedly,

"I'should judge you were likely to pass the winter here."

"Oh, Mr. West is never bright so late in the season," commented Kate. "All his jokes are used up by the end of August."

"That's all you know about it," West retorted. "My head is as full of jokes as a West End car is of niggers, but there's nobody left to appreciate them."

A chorus of indignant protest arose, wherein all the young people made vast efforts to be sarcastic, with results by no means commensurate; and amid the fun and laughter, Gilbert hugged to his heart the delight of the regret in Phœbe's tone when she echoed his "tomorrow."

While this chaffing was going on the little steamer had advanced until the Magaguadavic River opened full upon their view,—a lovely sheet of water, to which the hills, tinted with variegated autumnal foliage, sloped on all sides save that from which the boat came. The picturesque reel of a seine-dryer stood on a raft near the southern shore, in the flowing outline of whose varied slopes still was not lost the dignity which the breadth and extent of the estuary gave to the splendid view. It was one of the most enchanting landscapes to be found on all the beautiful coast of the Gulf of Maine, and the

party of excursionists were warm in their expressions of delight.

"It is the loveliest place I ever saw," Olive declared. "It is perfectly idle to try to talk about it."

The hills were reflected in the water; numerous kingfishers flashed between the shore and the voyagers, breaking the stillness with their mournful cries; while the little boat went steadily forward, although a turn in the river hid the upper course of the stream from sight, and there seemed no outlet before them.

Just at the time when the view became most captivating Mr. Crawford appeared on deck, announcing that luncheon was ready in the cabin, and insisting that everybody should come at once and eat it. Fortunately the sides of the saloon consisted largely of windows which could be taken out, so that the appetite and the æsthetic sense could be gratified at once, and ham-sandwiches and glimpses of beautiful turns in the winding river were forthwith enjoyed together.

There had been some delay in starting and the head winds had somewhat delayed the boat, so that it was announced that there would be no time for landing at St. George, the little village which marked the limit of the excursion. The tide had already turned when they reached the place, and the tug depended upon high water for depth enough to get safely away again. From the deck they could see the delicate white spray of the picturesque falls which come tumbling down over the rocks not far from the wharf before which the steamer turned; but for that day the beauties of Lake Utopia were not for the pleasure-seekers.

Gilbert and Phœbe stood together in the bow of the boat as its head was set toward Campobello, the rest of the party being for the moment in the stern, catching last glimpses of St. George.

"This is the end of the summer," the girl said, a little wistfully. "How I do hate to have things end!"

"Everything?" he asked.

"Why, of course you know I mean pleasant things."

"Then you have found it pleasant here?" he asked, with a certain intensity of tone which made her glance up quickly, and then nervously draw more tightly about her the shawl in which she had wrapped herself.

"Oh, very pleasant," she answered. "I think Campobello is lovely."

There were a few moments in which the only sound was the splashing of the water before the bow of the tug. Then they shot by a little

fishing-boat, at sight of which Gilbert uttered an involuntary exclamation.

"What is it?" Phœbe asked.

He laughed nervously, the color coming into his cheeks.

"It is only a boat I saw at Eastport one day," he answered. "It had a funny name, that's all. I wonder what it is doing up here. Smuggling, very likely."

"But what is the name?"

He looked at her keenly, and then, in a voice which had dropped into a strangely low key, he replied briefly,—

"'Go Ask Her.'"

She tried to speak, but she blushed instead. She endeavored to look indifferent, but was so painfully alive to the completeness of her failure that she turned away.

"It is cold," she said. "Let's go out of the wind."

"Wait," Gilbert cried, stepping before her, "Phœbe, do give me time to ask her."

She gave him one sweet, thrilling look from her brown eyes which promised all he could ask, but what she said was,—

"The man in the pilot-house is watching." And they walked demurely aft.

## XXV.

WELL, MAKE AN END OF 'T.

Youth and Age, v. 3.

"PHOEBE," Olive said, as they were preparing for dinner that night, "what is the matter with you? You act like a kitten in the wind."

"Have n't I been in the wind all day, mammaina? What could you expect?"

"But I know something has happened."

"Oh, yes; we have been to Magaguadavic."

"Nonsense! I just know something especial has happened."

"Well, there has. We've got home all safe, and Clare Kellogg has n't said a nasty thing to me all day long."

"Has she said anything?"

"Not a word. That is the reason."

Olive went over to her daughter and took her by the shoulders, holding the girl at arm's length, and examining her face.

"You have surely been in some mischief,"

was her decision. "I do hope you have n't been teasing Gilbert."

"Me teasing, mamma! What a preposterous idea. I never teased a fly."

"That is all very well, but you have teased everything else," Olive said, returning to the hair-dressing which she had interrupted; "but you can't deceive me."

"No one can deceive a mother's eye," Phœbe laughed saucily. "Well, then; we'll say I've been teasing him, and let it go."

"If I get you away from here," pursued Olive, with more guile than was apparent even to her astute daughter, "without another grand quarrel, I shall look upon myself as a wonderful being. I'll own, by the way," she added, turning before the mirror to observe the effect of the standing ruff of the gown of leek-green plush she wore, "that you were right about Mr. Manton. He did n't do a thing to help me about Gilbert and Clare Kellogg."

"Why, mamma Van Orden!"

"Well, what did he do?"

"As if you did n't know what he did."

"But what was it?"

Phœbe was in a mood of unusual exhilaration and nervousness, and now she paused in her somewhat erratic wanderings about the chamber to throw herself upon the bed, piling the pillows behind her head and suddenly changing from an air of the utmost restlessness into one of complete languor.

"Mammaina," she observed, "you don't do credit to the care with which I've brought you up. You should be more observing. Did n't Mr. Manton dance the german with me, stick to me whenever we were out together, and otherwise inflame Gilbert's jealousy to the highest possible degree?"

Olive turned on her daughter with a swiftness that was by no means all acting.

"Phœbe Van Orden," she cried, "when I consider your supernatural guile, I declare I am afraid to trust Gilbert in your company. Just as likely as not you'll bejuggle him into falling in love with you."

"Just as likely as not," echoed Phœbe with comical gravity of manner.

"Phœbe!"

The exclamation burst from Olive's lips with an explosiveness which shook even the studied calm of her daughter. The girl changed color, as her mother made a long stride forward and looked sharply in her face.

"Phœbe, you have n't been really philandering with Gilbert Hampton?"

Phœbe gave a little gasp, but she rallied gallantly.

"Philandering," she observed dispassionately, trying to lift her glance to meet her mother's and failing in the attempt, "is not only a slang term, but it is extremely vague in its meaning. Exactly what do you mean by philandering?"

"Come, I am in earnest. I want to know what has happened to put you in such a wild state. Have you — Phœbe Van Orden," she broke off, real exasperation beginning to mingle remotely with her half-laughing manner, "I certainly will send you back to boarding-school if you don't behave better and treat me with more respect."

"I would n't, mammaina; you know I have your example for running away from boarding-school and getting married," laughed Phœbe.

Then she jumped up and threw her arms about Olive's neck, some feminine instinct stronger than all her excitement making her skilfully avoid crushing the Elizabethan ruff.

"Dear mamma," she said in a voice suddenly soft and low, "you are a dear old mammaina. Don't cross-question me any more. I am so nervous I might cry, and you'd hate to see me descend to dinner with streaming eyes."

Her tones were as saucy as ever as she ended; and Olive, realizing that there was nothing to be learned from her daughter in her present frame of mind, abandoned the conversation. Olive by this time was better aware of Gilbert's feelings toward her daughter than she would acknowledge. The fact that she was absorbed in Dr. Westacott, whose vacation was drawing to its very close, prevented her seeing the young people together so much as would otherwise have been the case; and she was so confident that Phæbe would check all advances at precisely the right point that she felt free to keep her own mind from any keen sense of responsibility. To-night however she was seriously troubled, and hurrying downstairs before Phæbe was ready, she found Dr. Westacott and led him into the bay-window in the parlor.

"How lovely you look in that dress!" her lover said, regarding her with admiration.

She smiled with pleasure, but instantly a frown of anxiety chased the light from her face.

"Rufus," she said, "I do believe I have been an idiot for the second time this summer. Do you suppose Gilbert Hampton has been saying anything to Phœbe?"

"If he has n't it's the first day he's kept quiet for some weeks."

"Oh, but I mean anything special."

"If he has n't," repeated Dr. Westacott, a smile shining in his handsome eyes, although he

made a strong effort to keep his face grave, "he certainly will, as I told you long ago."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! what can I do? They are both as obstinate as—"

She paused as if she could think of no comparison at all adequate, lifting her glance to the smiling eyes looking down into her face with rather provoking expression.

"But why should n't he propose to her? You know it's got to come."

"But, Rufus, Phœbe is a mere child."

He smiled more provokingly yet.

"Bless me, Olive," he answered, "anybody would think to hear you talk that age was a matter of years. Phæbe is old enough, and shrewd enough, and withal wilful enough; so she may, can, and will have her own way. Don't bother. We'll give them our blessing when the time comes, with all the dignity in the world. You'll make a beautiful mother-in-law."

She put up her chin and laid her white hand to her whiter throat with a gesture of perplexity and helplessness.

"Phœbe laughs at me," she said plaintively, "and if I come to you for help you laugh at me. I'm sure I don't think I'm so ridiculous."

"You are adorable," was his response; "and therefore we will go in to dinner."

It was hardly to be expected that Gilbert, in

his present frame of mind, would remain satisfied with the glance by which Phœbe had answered his outburst on the steamer. After dinner when the men repaired to the smokingroom, he insisted that Miss Van Orden should go out for a walk; and although the evening was closing in gray and cold, and although Olive remonstrated, his impetuosity and Phœbe's willingness carried the day, and it was not long before the pair slipped out of the house into the friendly shelter of the thick dusk.

Their hearts were beating rapidly enough; but with great outward propriety of demeanor they walked in silence past the house and began to descend into the darkness with which the thickly-growing trees upon the hill fill the road, when suddenly Gilbert, without warning,—almost without being conscious of what he was doing,—threw his arms about his companion, and kissed her fervently, again and again.

"Stop, stop!" she cried out. "Oh, what are you doing?"

His shyness had apparently vanished in that embrace, for he answered boldly,—

"I am kissing - my wife."

She freed herself from his embrace, and stood facing him in the gloom, panting with excitement. Then with a cry that hysterically mingled a laugh and a sob, she flung herself back

into his arms, clasping her own about his neck and laying her soft, warm lips to his.

When they re-entered the house, — as long after as Gilbert could persuade his companion to stay out of doors, — it was remarked by Miss Mayho, who always spoke her thoughts with the most impulsive bluntness, the wind had given Miss Van Orden a remarkably high color.

"It's come, Hitty," Kate Hatherway remarked in her ear oracularly. "You may depend upon it, it has come."

Happily unconscious of this observation, which may be set down as one of the advantages of a wooing conducted in so public a place as a hotel, Phæbe and Gilbert took their way upstairs to their respective rooms. The fate which chose to be kind in details, now that the essential was accomplished, arranged that they should encounter in the upper hall Olive, regal in her pale-green gown.

"Where in the world have you been all this time?" Mrs. Van Orden exclaimed. "I was getting so frightened about you that I was going to send Rufus to see if you had blown away."

"Oh, no," Gilbert responded, taking hold of Phœbe's hand; "we have only been getting engaged."

"Only getting engaged!" echoed Olive. "Nonsense! You are two mere babes."

"Of course," he laughed, his frank eyes full of light; "but we are going to be married all the same."

" But — "

"There is no but about it, mammaina," Phœbe be observed philosophically. "Of course we are not going to be married right-off, that is only Gilbert's nonsense. We—"

"I should hope not! In five or six years, if you held to the same mind, there might be some sense in discussing such a thing; but now you'd much better go to your playthings. You are about old enough to enjoy making mud-pies."

"Very well," Gilbert responded. "Only we insist upon making them together."

THE END.







